WHISTLE!

SHONEN JUMP MANGA

Story & Art by

Daisuke Higuchi

volume 23

WHISTLE!
23
Daisuke Higuchi

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THE WORLD'S MOST POPULAR MANGA

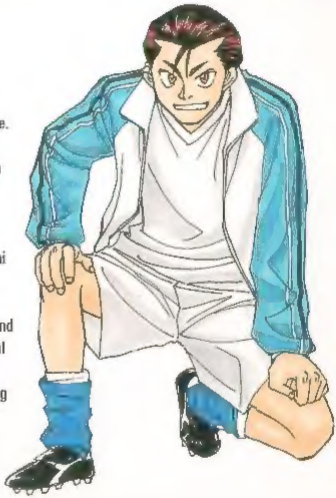
SHONEN JUMP

WHISTLE! volume 23

SOLDIER BLUE

Everybody has a dream, and for Shô Kazamatsuri, that dream is simple: he wants to be the best soccer player he can possibly be. He has managed to get a spot on the Tokyo Select Team as a substitute. But he has yet to prove he has the talent and the skills to stay on a championship team.

Shigeki has reappeared as a member of Kansai select and now faces off against Shô and his former teammates from Tokyo. And it's immediately clear that he's improved far beyond expectation. As Shô clashes with this powerful new opponent, Tatsuya must deal with his feelings of confusion and anger at this seeming betrayal by his old friend.



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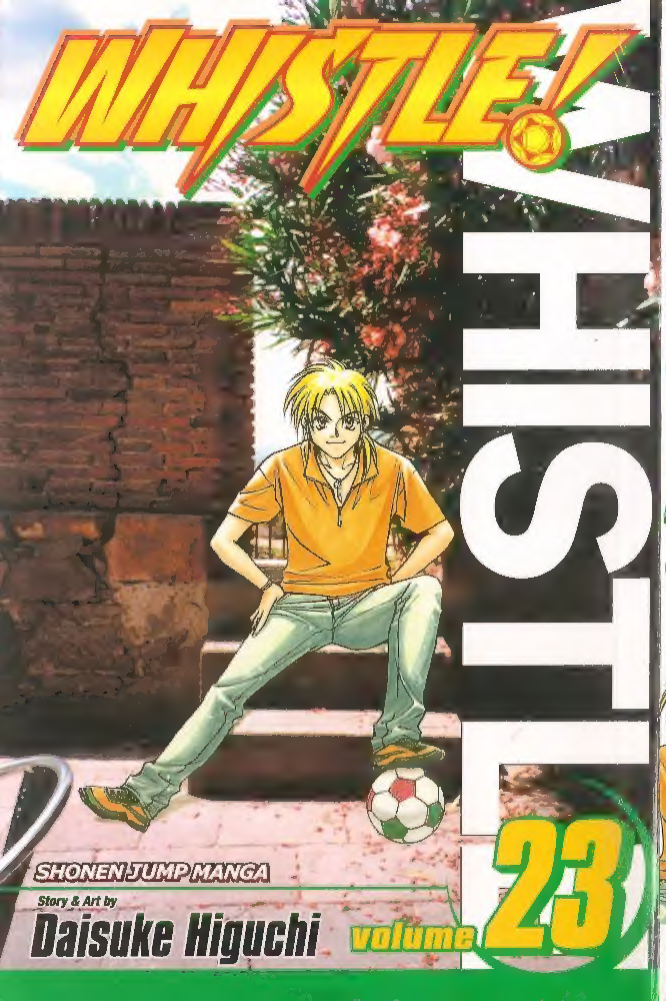

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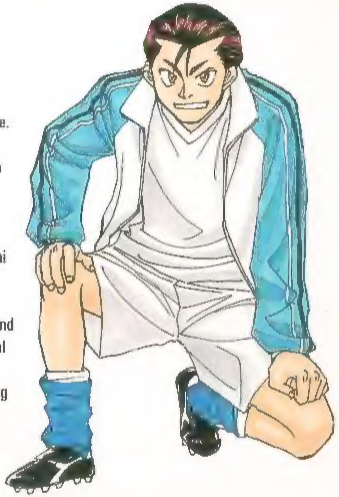

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樋口大輔

Most people avoid seeing what goes on backstage that makes up the glittering show before them. But I myself am more attracted to what's behind the scenes. I think that that's where the true beauty of humanity is revealed.

– Daisuke Higuchi

Daisuke Higuchi's manga career began in 1992 when the artist was honored with third prize in the 43rd Osamu Tezuka Award. In that same year, Higuchi debuted as creator of a romantic action story titled ***Itaru***. In 1998, ***Weekly Shonen Jump*** began serializing ***Whistle!*** Higuchi's realistic soccer manga became an instant hit with readers and eventually inspired an anime series, debuting on Japanese TV in May of 2002.

WHISTLE!
VOL. 23: SOLDIER BLUE

The SHONEN JUMP Manga Edition

STORY AND ART BY
DAISUKE HIGUCHI

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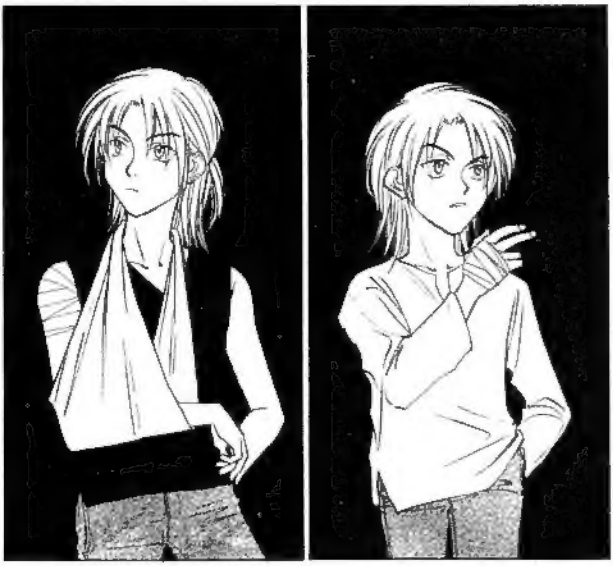

WHISTLE!

Vol. 23

SOLDIER BLUE

Story and Art by **Daisuke Higuchi**

CHARACTERS

SHŌ KAZAMATSURI

- JOSUI JUNIOR HIGH SOCCER TEAM
  FORWARD

AKIRA SAIONJI

TSUBASA SHIINA

TATSUYA MIZUNO

- JOSUI JUNIOR HIGH SOCCER TEAM
  MIDFIELDER

SHIGEKI FUJIMURA

KANSAI SELECT TEAM

FORWARD

KATSURŌ SHIBUSAWA

TOKYO SELECT TEAM

GOALKEEPER

SEIJI FUJISHIRO

TOKYO SELECT TEAM

FORWARD

STORY

TO REALIZE HIS DREAM, SHŌ KAZAMATSURI, A BENCHWARMER AT SOCCER POWERHOUSE MUSASHINOMORI, TRANSFERRED TO JOSUI JUNIOR HIGH SO HE COULD PLAY THE GAME HE LOVES.

BY PLAYING MANY GAMES AND GOING UP AGAINST POWERFUL SOCCER PLAYERS, SHŌ GRADUALLY SHARPENS HIS SKILLS AND MANAGES TO LAND A SUBSTITUTE POSITION ON THE WORLD-TRAVELING TOKYO SELECT TEAM.

TOKYO SELECT TEAM HAS NOW JOINED THE NATIONAL TORESEN--A TRAINING EVENT WHERE THE BEST PLAYERS FROM EACH DISTRICT GO HEAD-TO-HEAD IN AN INTENSE ELIMINATION TOURNAMENT.

IN THE FINAL GAME, TOKYO IS UP AGAINST KANSAI SELECT, AND THEIR STAR PLAYER IS SHIGEKI--SHŌ AND TATSUYA'S EX-CLASSMATE FROM JOSUI. WILL THEY BE FACING OFF AGAINST A DEAR FRIEND...OR A RUTHLESS ENEMY?

WHISTLE!

Vol. 23
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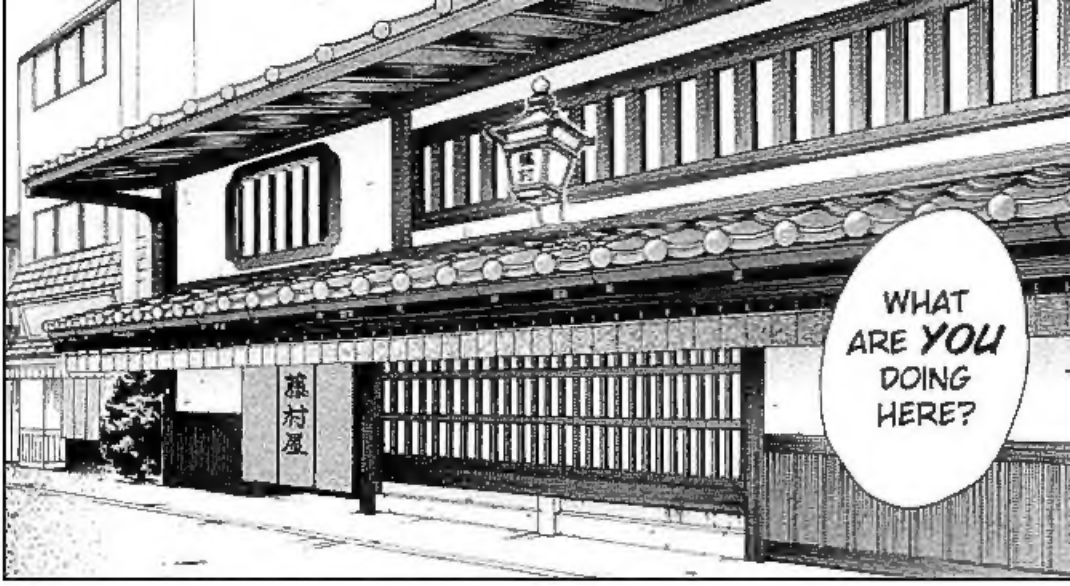
I WONDER WHEN IT HAPPENED.
HE LOVES SOCCER...
...AND HE GOES AFTER THE BALL WITH ALL HIS HEART AND SOUL.
WHEN DID I START FEELING JEALOUS OF THAT?

– Prologue –


WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

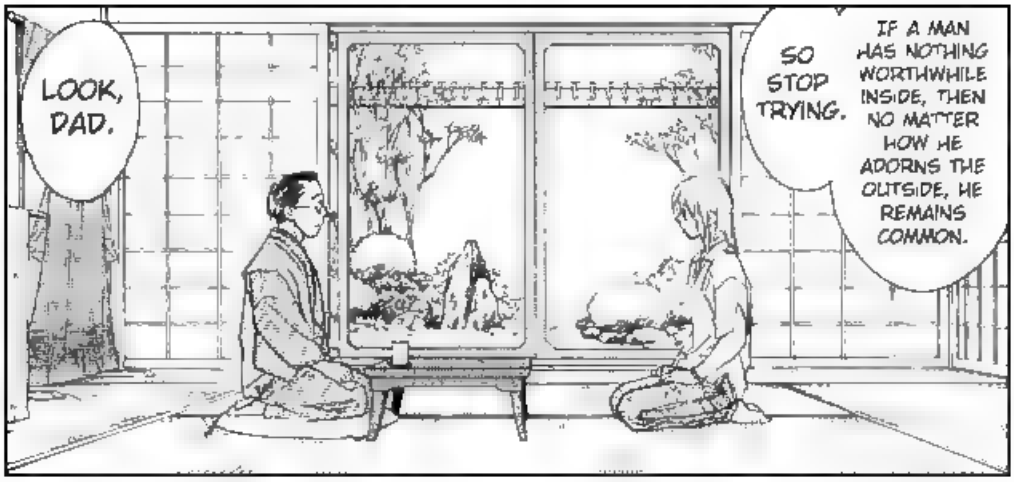
WHAT RIGHT DO YOU HAVE TO SEE HIM NOW?
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO RAN AWAY BECAUSE YOU DIDN'T WANT TO BE ADOPTED INTO THE FUJIMURA FAMILY.

WHAT'S ALL THE RACKET OUT HERE?

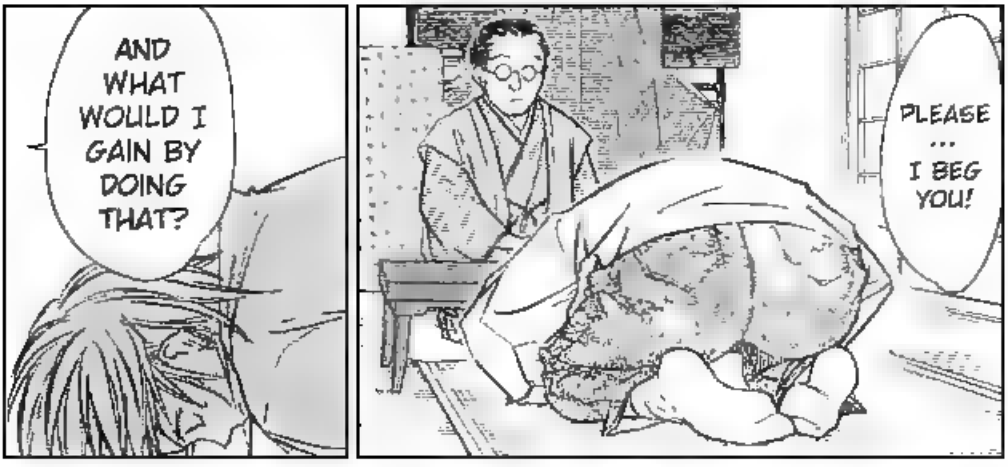
DON'T TALK TO ME LIKE THAT, KAEDE. I'M HERE TO SEE DAD.
THAT A PROBLEM, SIS?

MOM!
I APOLOGIZE FOR NOT VISITING SOONER, MA'AM.
OH MY, IT'S SHIGEKI.
HOW BIG YOU'VE GROWN. YOU LOOK MORE LIKE YOUR MOTHER, YŌKO, EVERY DAY.
MR. FUJIMURA WILL SEE YOU NOW.
PLEASE COME IN.
SHAA
COME IN.
SIR... SHIGEKI HAS ARRIVED.

WHAT IS THIS RIDICULOUS STYLE YOU'RE WEARING?

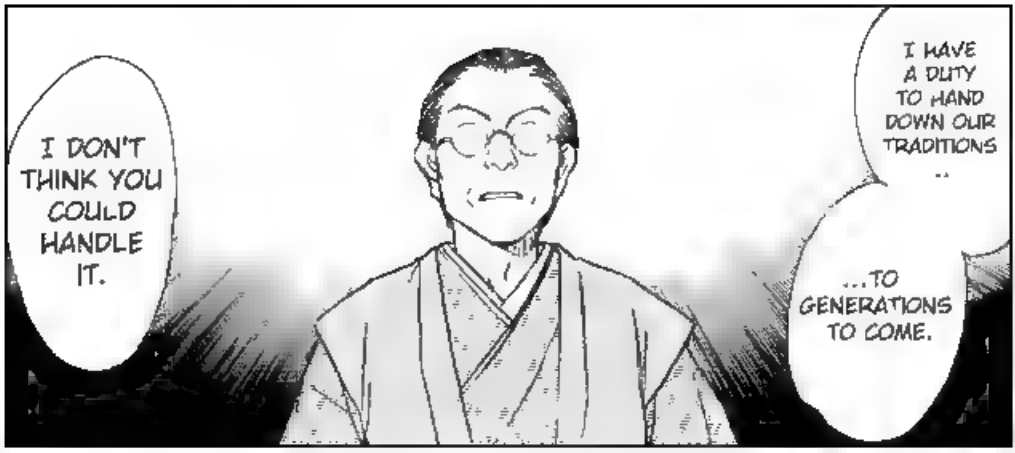

LOOK, DAD.
SO STOP TRYING.
IF A MAN HAS NOTHING WORTHWHILE INSIDE, THEN NO MATTER HOW HE ADORNS THE OUTSIDE, HE REMAINS COMMON.

'SIP
I CAN EARN MY PLACE IF I GET A CHANCE.
ALL I'M ASKING YOU TO DO IS TO RECOMMEND ME AS A CANDIDATE.
AS ONE OF THE SPONSORS, WILL YOU SPEAK TO THOSE INVOLVED IN THE KANSAI SOCCER LEAGUE ON MY BEHALF?


AND WHAT WOULD I GAIN BY DOING THAT?
PLEASE ... I BEG YOU!

OH DEAR...
HA HA HA
I DIDN'T EXPECT YOU TO SAY THAT.
HA
...LET ME PLAY SOCCER AS MUCH AS I WANT WHILE I'M STILL A STUDENT.
ONLY PLEASE ...
I'D BE WILLING TO ACCEPT MY ROLE AS YOUR SUCCESSOR!

I CAN'T TRUST YOU.
WHEN THINGS GET HARD, YOU JUST RUN AWAY!
SOMEONE LIKE THAT CAN'T BE SERIOUS ABOUT ANYTHING.
YOU'RE NOT WORTH THE EFFORT!


I DON'T THINK YOU COULD HANDLE IT.
I HAVE A DUTY TO HAND DOWN OUR TRADITIONS ..
...TO GENERATIONS TO COME.

MY SISTER MOMIJI IS MARRYING SOMEONE IN TOKYO, ISN'T SHE?
GET OUT.

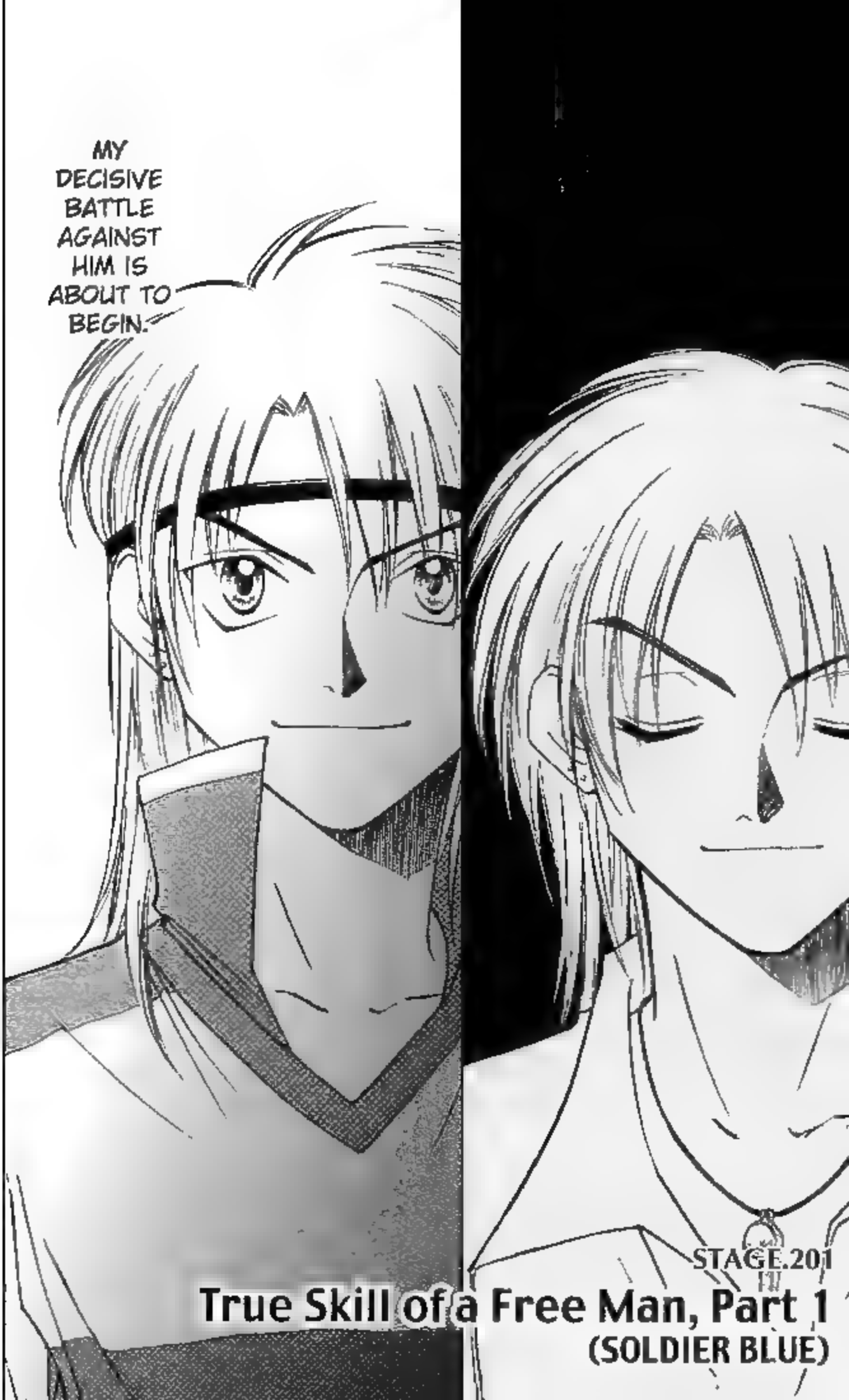
...
YOU THINK YOU'RE SO CLEVER.
ALL WE NEED IS TO FIND A SUITABLE HUSBAND FOR KAEDE.
DO YOU THINK YOU HAVE A LEG TO STAND ON?
DASH
I DON'T HAVE ANYWHERE ELSE TO TURN!
PLEASE, PLEASE, FATHER!
PLEASE, I BEG YOU!
I WANT TO PUT ALL I HAVE INTO SOCCER!
THERE'S SOMEONE I NEED TO FIGHT!

YES!

VERY WELL.

SO IS FIGHTING THIS "SOMEONE" WORTH HUMBLING YOURSELF TO THIS EXTENT?

BUT IN EXCHANGE, I WILL NOT PERMIT ANYTHING HALF-HEARTED FROM YOU!
I'VE ALREADY MADE THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR YOU.
DO AS YOU WISH.
ONCE YOU LOSE, YOU'RE DONE WITH SOCCER. YOU WILL ENTER THE HOUSE THEN, AS MY HEIR.
YOU MUST CONTINUE TO WIN.
...THANK YOU.
SOMEONE WHO'S NEVER SHOWN COMPLETE DEVOTION TO ANY ONE THING WILL LACK WISDOM AND FORE-THOUGHT.
I CANNOT ENTRUST MY TRADITION TO SOME-ONE LIKE THAT.



STAGE.201

True Skill of a Free Man, Part 1 (SOLDIER BLUE)

KANSAI
1ST
TOKYO
2ND
45
10
IS IT THAT OBVIOUS?
YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'RE ENJOYING YOURSELF.

STAGE.201

True Skill of a Free Man, Part 1 (SOLDIER BLUE)

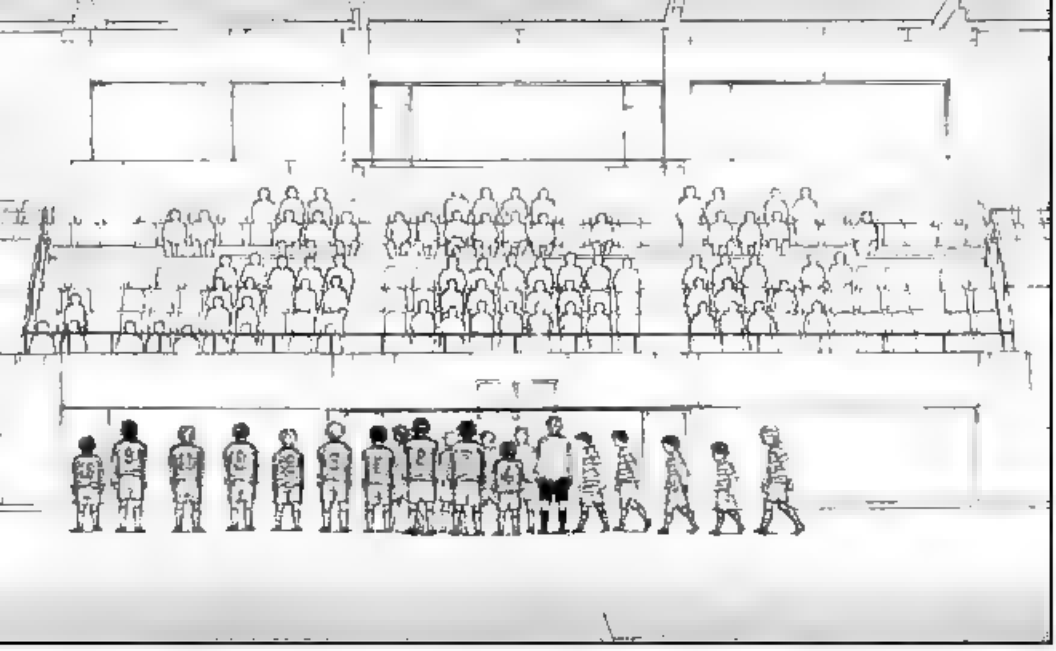
I'VE BEEN PLAYING SOCCER FOR A WHILE, BUT FOR ME TO BE THIS EXCITED...
I THINK IT'S A FIRST.

SLAP
SLAP

...I'VE MADE IT THIS FAR.
FINALLY ...

WHAT, NAOKI, YOU'RE A SUB?
SHUT UP! THE TRUMP CARD'S GOTTA COME OUT AT THE END ...
GRRR
HMMM. THE TRUMP CARD, HUH.
TSU-BASA!
WHAAAA?
I'LL LOOK OUT FOR IT.
DID HE COME OVER TO CHEER ME UP, EVEN THOUGH I DITCHED HIM?
TSU-BASA ...
SNIFF
SNIFF

KANSAI SELECT VERSUS TOKYO SELECT...
...THE FINAL GAME BEGINS NOW!!



HEH. THE LITTLE GUY IS A STARTING MEMBER, HUH?
MAN, I'M SO JEALOUS.

HE MUST HAVE A LOT OF SELF-CONFIDENCE.
BLEACH-BLOND FLASHY.

YEAH.
A SHOWDOWN BETWEEN CONTRASTING TEAMS... HMPH.

YOU IDIOT, THERE'S NO WAY KATSURŌ WOULD LOSE.
HEY, KAZU... KANSAI LOOKS PRETTY TOUGH TOO.

COMPARED TO TOKYO SELECT, WHO PLAYS SMART AND, IN A WAY, IS A VERY JAPANESE-STYLE TEAM...
THE KANSAI SELECT IS...

!
OOOH, SCARY!
I'M GOING TO GET YOU BACK THIS TIME.

HMPH
SMIRK
GRIPP

AND I WON'T GO EASY ON YOU.

WE WON'T LOSE.

SHOOM

EVER SINCE JOSUI, WHEN WE WERE ON THE SAME TEAM...
SHIGEKI...
...WAS ALWAYS...
TWEET
東京
東京

AND...
KICK OFF!
...SOME-ONE I IDOLIZED.

STAGE.201 **True Skill of a Free Man, Part 2**
(SOLDIER BLUE)

THAT'S THE IMPRESSION HE GAVE ME.

AS IF HE WERE HOLDING BACK...

AS IF HE DIDN'T WANT TO COMMIT HIMSELF...

STAGE.201

True Skill of a Free Man, Part 2 (SOLDIER BLUE)

THU
NK
ZOOM
BAM

WHOOSH

HA! DOING MAN-TO-MAN?
SHOOO
TAP
M

BA
P
DOO
M
SORRY

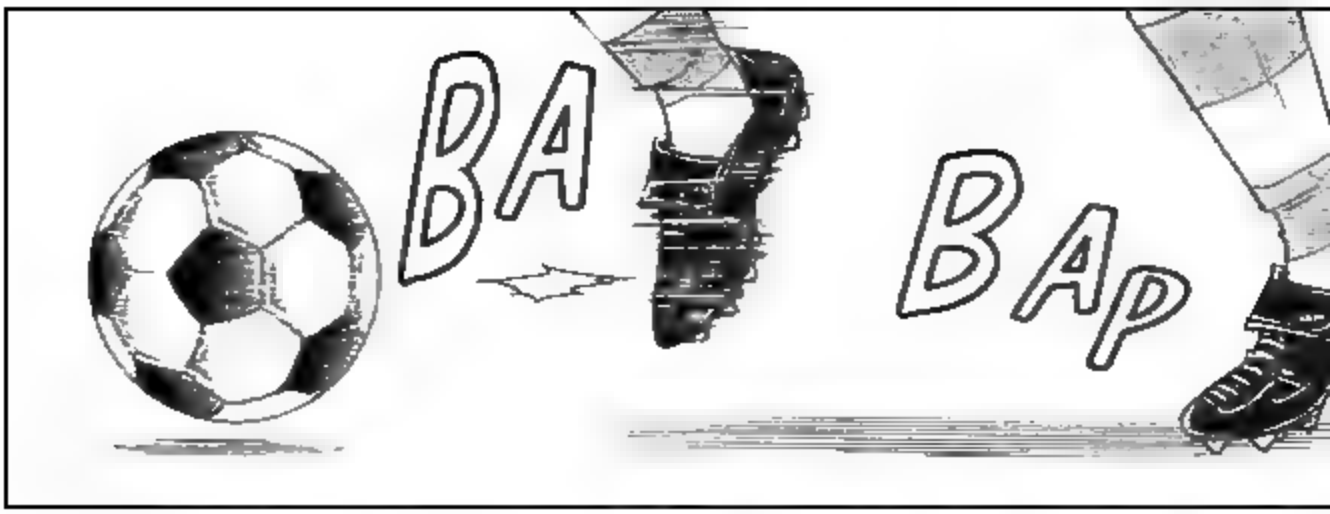
NICE
TRY!
SMIRK

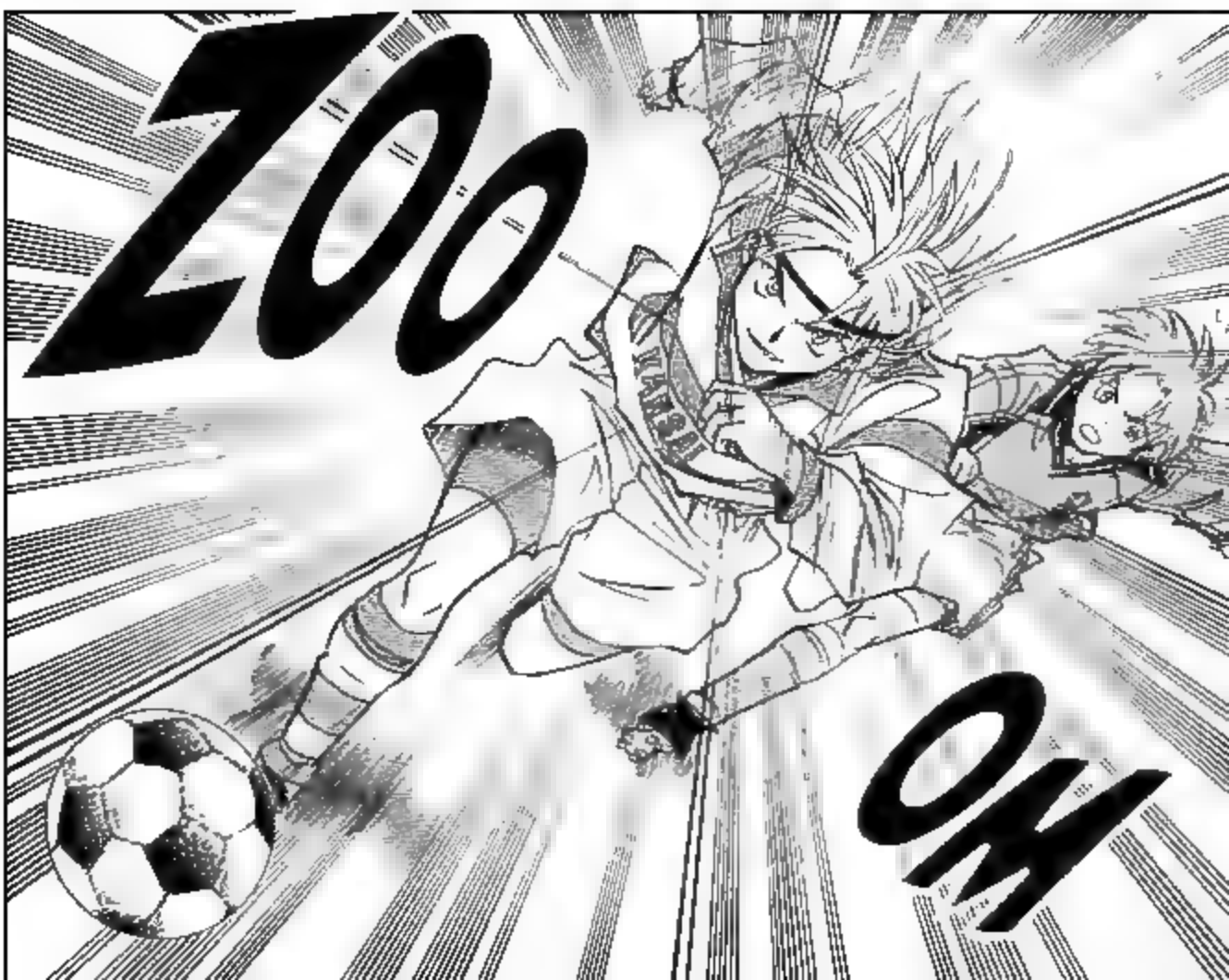
KANSAI

GULP

SHIGEKI!

BAP


BA
BAP


ZOO
OH

OH NO YOU DON'T!
DARN.
ZIP
EW
OOSH

10

10

10
STEP
ZOOM

BA
BUMP
I...
WON'T LET...
...YOU.

BOOM

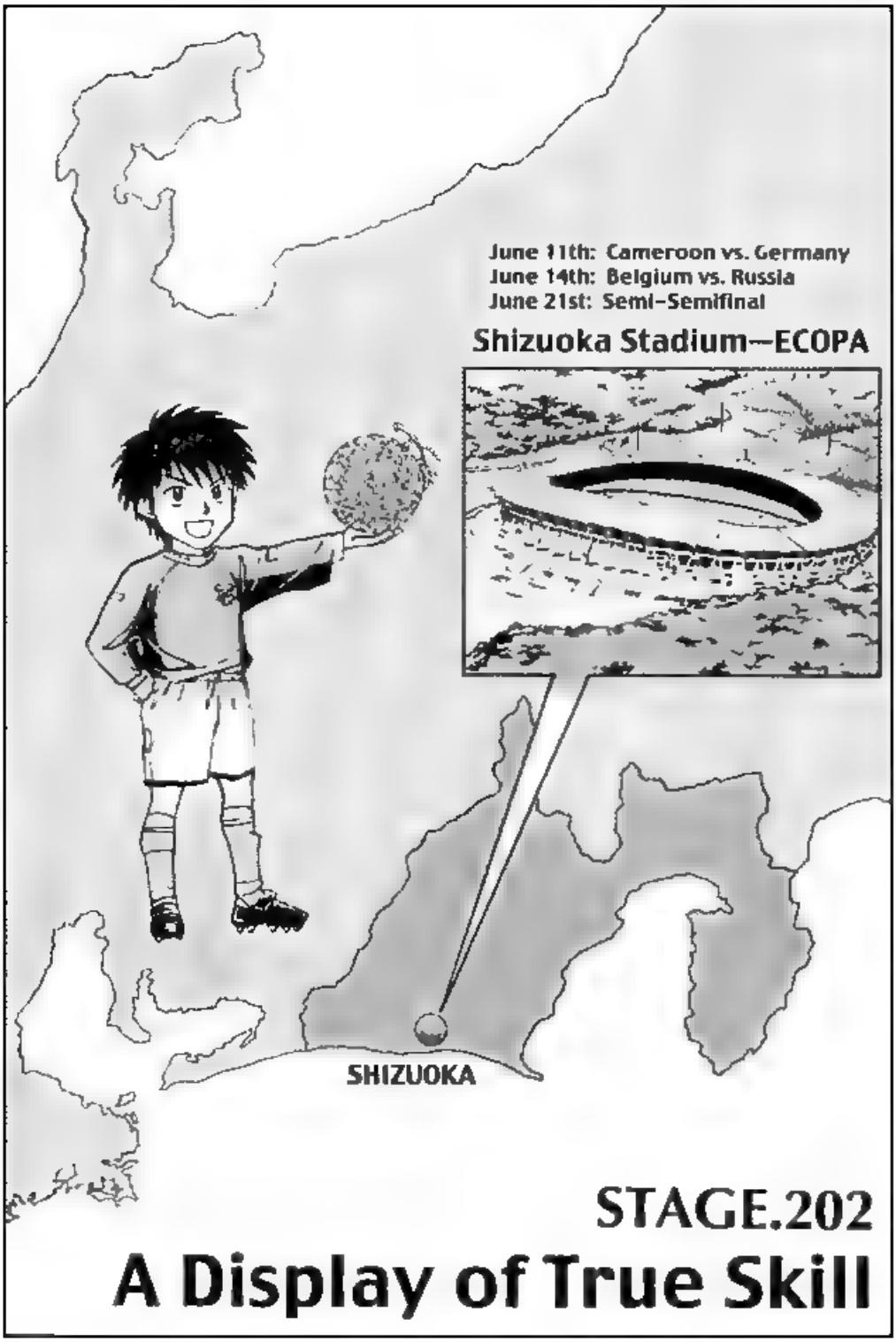
HE DID IT!
HE STOPPED HIM!

KANSAI

BAM
WHOA, HE WENT FOR IT!
WHAP

SHI-
GEKI!

WHISTLE!



STAGE.202
A Display of True Skill

IS THIS YOUR TRUE SKILL ?!
YOU'RE LIKE A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT PERSON THAN YOU WERE AT JOSUI...
HEY!
SHI-GEKI!
KANSAI
ARE YOU TRYING TO SHOW OFF OR SOME-THING?!
QUIT HOGGING THE BALL, DUDE!
KANSAI

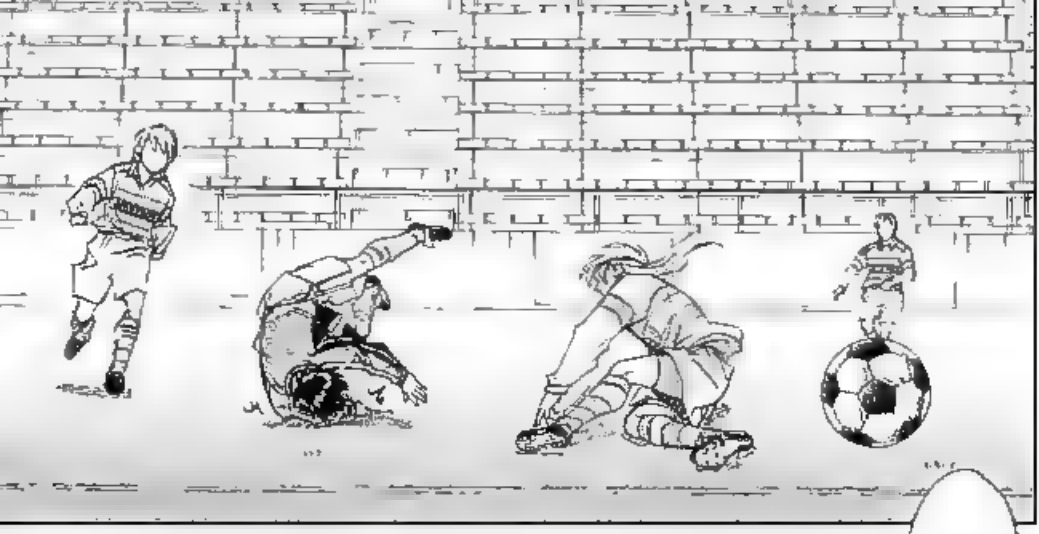
WHEN THERE'S MONEY AT STAKE, I CAN'T LET IT GO!
OF COURSE NOT.
IS THAT REALLY OKAY, COACH?
WELL ...
THE KIDS ARE DOING IT ON THEIR OWN. I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT IT.
Kansai Select Coach, Kanzō Yamamoto

BA M

I WONDER WHO FIRST CAME UP WITH THE IDEA THAT EACH PLAYER GIVES 500 YEN TO WHOEVER SCORES THE MOST.
ACTUALLY HIS IDEA

AH!
WH
AM
WHUMP
GRR.
BOOM
KANSAI
KANSAI
IT'S MINE!

WHA?
BA
SHOOM
YOU LOUSY MIDGET!
HEY, WAIT!



SHŌ.
KANSAI
THROW IN, TOKYO!

IT'S REALLY AMAZ NG!
SHIGEKI'S BODY IS INCREDIBLY AGILE!
INCREDIBLE!
YOU OKAY?

TA-TSUYA ?
WHAT'S THE POINT OF PRAISING THE ENEMY?
GRRR

BÓ
ỌM
KA
POW

A POWERFUL *THROUGH PASS!*
TOO MUCH!
THAT PASS WAS A SURE THING!
BUT...!
THEY CAN'T GET THERE IN TIME!
WHAT ARE YOU *DOING*?!
I'M SORRY, TATSUYA!

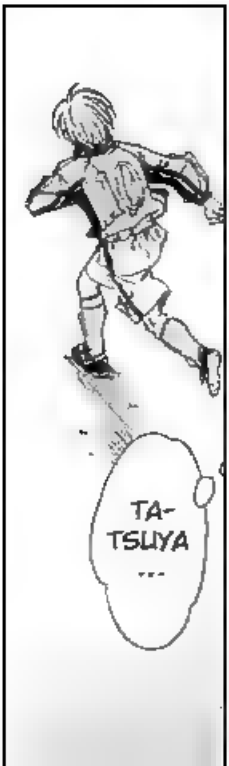
FREAKED OUT? ME?
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT ..
WHY ARE YOU SO FREAKED OUT?
IT WAS A DIFFICULT PASS.

BOO
ABOUT WHAT?
OH

IN JUST TEN MINUTES, THEY'VE MADE SEVEN SHOTS ON THE GOAL!
JUST YOU WAIT.

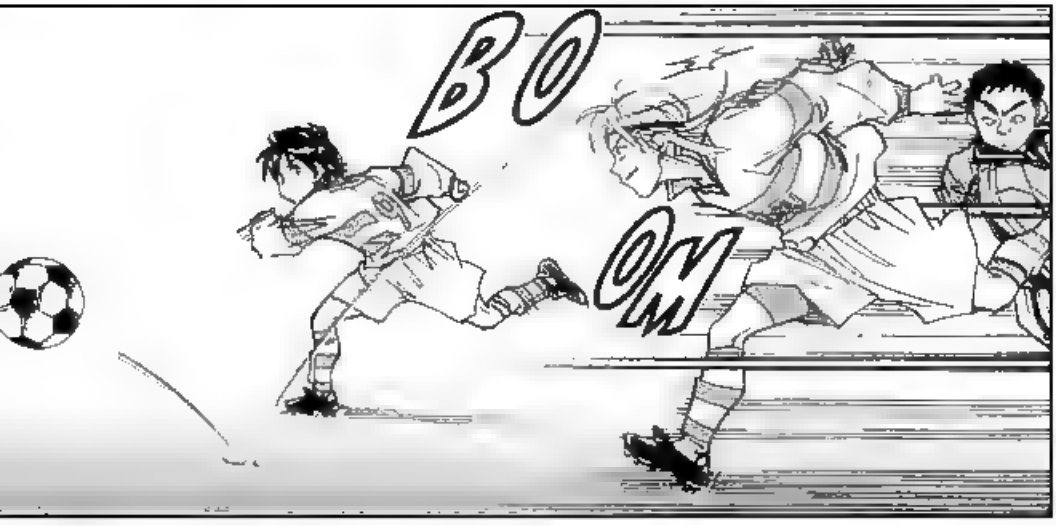
KANSAI HAS BEEN IN CONTROL OF THIS GAME FROM THE FIRST WHISTLE!

...AND THAT MEANS SUPER-AGGRESSIVE SOCCER.
COMPARED TO TOKYO SELECT, KANSAI IS GREEDY FOR VICTORY...


TA-TSUYA ...

KANSAI'S A REAL CHALLENGE.
THEY WOULDN'T BE SO AGGRESSIVE WITHOUT SHIGEKI.

BOING
BO
ING


BO
OM

SHO
M

WHY ARE YOU...
TA-TSU-BOY!
...AS MY ENEMY?
STANDING IN FRONT OF ME NOW...
SHIGEKI ...

SHI-
GEKI!
TA-
TSU-
YA!
IF HE'S FACING AN OPPONENT WHO'S STRONG ON THE LEFT...
KNOWING SHIGEKI ...
RIGHT? LEFT?
WHICH WAY?
HE STEPPED OVER! IT'S THE LEFT!!

SCISSORS FEINT!

SCRATCH
THIS IS A FEINT TOO?
HE STEPPED OVER TWICE ?!
BOOM
WHOA!

SHIGEKI, WHAT AM I TO YOU?

WHISTLE!

STAGE.203

An Old Friend Blocking the Way

10
KANSAI

STAGE.203

An Old Friend Blocking the Way

I THOUGHT...
I THOUGHT WE COULD IMPROVE SIDE BY SIDE.
WHOA
AMAZING DEXTERITY!
HE'S AS GOOD AS SEIJI!
EVEN I...
...COULDN'T PULL THAT OFF.

RAD! I'M SO STOKED! ♡
SO THIS IS HIS TRUE LEVEL OF TALENT, HUH?
THE DEFENSE DOESN'T HAVE TIME TO SIT BACK AND GAWK LIKE THE REST OF YOU...
WE'RE WAY TOO BUSY OVER HERE!

THREE MEN HAVE RUSHED OUT TO STOP NUMBER 11!
SURELY_ EVEN SHIGEKI WILL BE SHUT DOWN BY THAT!
HUH ?!

WINK
SHOOM
EVEN AGAINST THREE DEFENDERS ...
SHOOM
HE'S STILL HOLDING ON TO IT!
INCREDIBLE !!
KANSAI
4

I'M OPEN!
SHIGEKI, WHY DON'T YOU PASS THE BALL ALREADY!
TSK
HUH?
THUP
BOOM
HE TURNED HIS BACK ON THE GOAL.

SHUDDER
KA
HE SHOT IT!
POW

HERE IT COMES!
WHAM
OOH, TOO BAD!

HIS OPENING WAS BLOCKED!
IT HIT THE BAR!

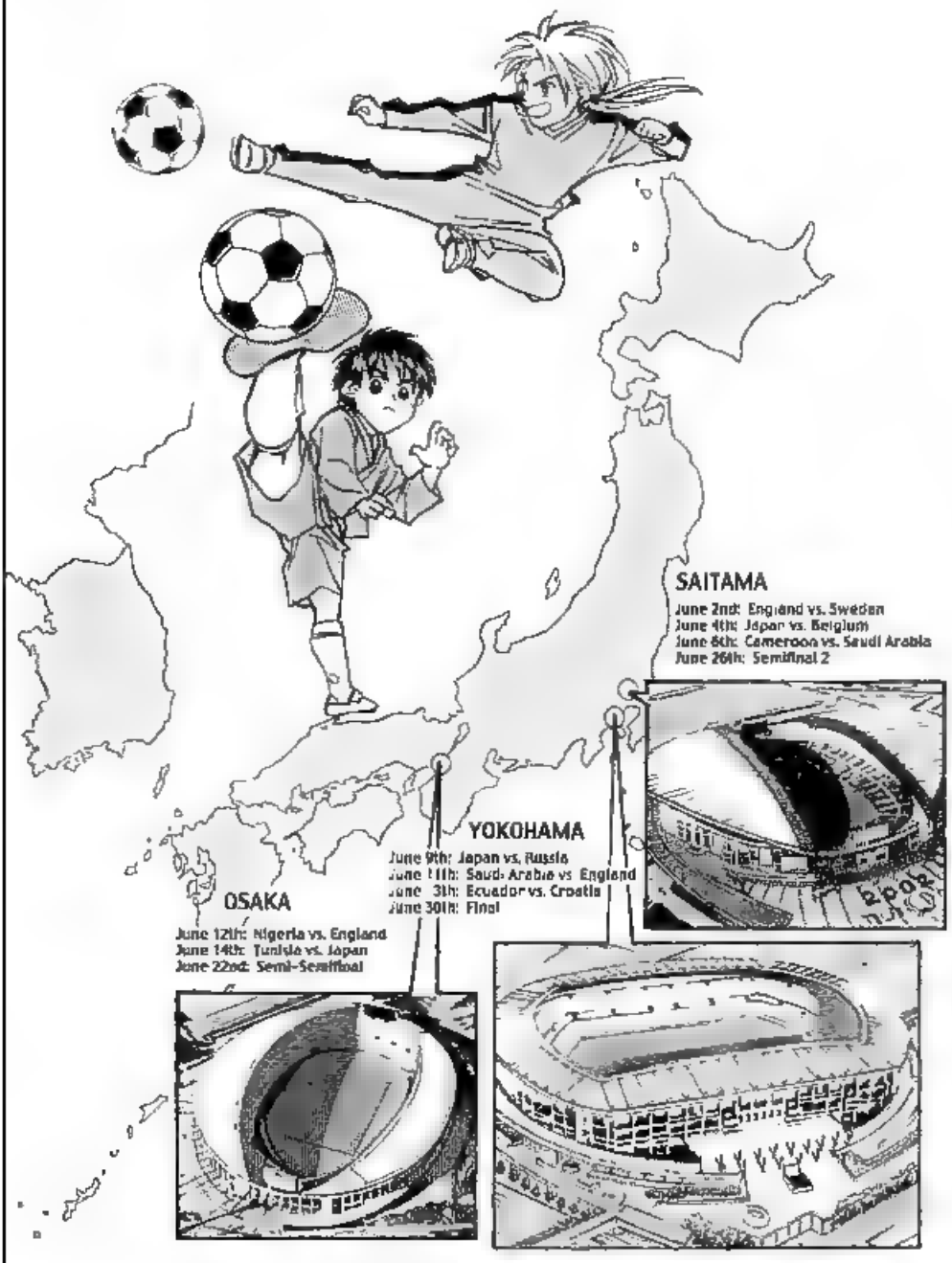
FWOOOSH

YEAH. OBVIOUSLY HE'S LEVELED UP SINCE THEN.
WHEN WE WERE UP AGAINST HIM BEFORE, I THOUGHT HE WAS REALLY GREAT, BUT...
...TO PLAY WITH ME BEFORE? IS THAT WHAT YOU'RE SAYING?
SO YOU WERE GOING BENEATH YOUR LEVEL...
SHI-GEKI!
HE HAS RETURNED ...
...AS A FORMIDABLE OPPONENT.

WHISTLE!

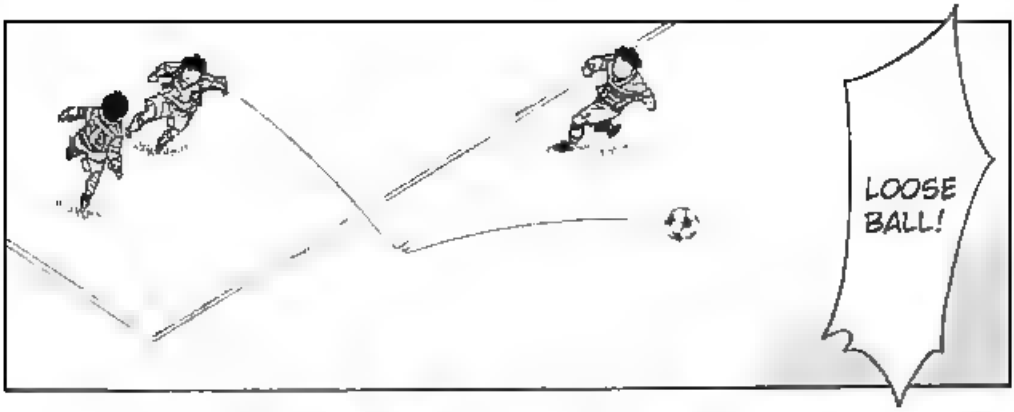
STAGE.204

The Boundless Spirit of Challenge



HE'S GOT OUTSTANDING TECHNIQUE AND FINESSE.
WHERE ON EARTH HAS SOMEONE THIS INCREDIBLE BEEN HIDING UP TILL NOW?
INDEED.
HE'S PROBABLY THE BEST SOCCER PLAYER OF HIS GENERATION.
WHAT A GUY!

HE'S GOT THE CHARISMA OF A NATURAL LEADER.
IF HE KEEPS ON DEVELOPING SMOOTHLY, HE'LL BECOME THE MAN WHO WILL CARRY THE FUTURE OF JAPANESE SOCCER.
THINK YOU CAN BEAT THIS GUY, TOKYO SELECT?


LOOSE BALL!

I'M THE KING OF THE SCORE-BOARD!
GOT IT!
KANO
BA
P

WHA?
10 OF

YOU'RE LETTING THE SAME GUY GO PAST YOU TWICE!
YOU MORON!
SHOOM
SHUT UP!
FWOO
PAY ATTENTION! I'LL SHOW YOU HOW IT'S DONE!
IT'S YOU AGAIN ?!
YOU LOUSY MIDGET!

SHOO
IS THAT "HOW IT'S DONE," JERK-WAD?
HUH?
THERE Y'GO! THE VANISHING FEINT!

NICE!
JEEZ, QUIT SCURRYING AROUND, YOU LITTLE BRAT!
GLANCE
GLANCE
IT'S ALL OVER FOR HIM NOW!
HE'S HEMMED IN BY THREE PLAYERS!
ZOOP
ZOOP
WE WON'T LET YOU ESCAPE!

HE BROKE THROUGH THREE PLAYERS!
PO
THEN I WILL TOO!
OKAY!

SEIJ'S UP FRONT BY HIMSELF.
NO ONE ELSE HAS MADE IT UP THERE YET.
TAKING OUT THE THREE-MAN FENCE, I'LL PASS TO SEIJI...
BAM
SPORT
BONK
GAH!

THUP
BA P
WHOA!
I GOT IT!
KANSAI
BA AP

!
HE BROKE THROUGH ?!
!
WHAP

HEY, THAT NUMBER 19...
IS HE ACTUALLY TRYING TO COPY SHIGEKI?
SHŌ!

NO WAY ...
DOES HE MEAN TO REPEAT THAT MOVE FROM EARLIER?

19
BOOM
THE PASS THAT RICOCHETS OFF THE GOAL-POST?

YOWCH!
POW
ARG!
HE MEANT TO AIM FOR THE GOAL, BUT...
...HE HIT THE BACK OF HIS TEAM-MATE'S HEAD INSTEAD!
UH-OH!

TUP
IT'S NOT OVER YET!
BUT...
THE BALL IS MOVING ...
...AND BOTH SIDES ARE CHARGING!

I CAN'T DO IT THE WAY SHIGEKI DID, BUT...

EVEN IF IT'S BEYOND ME NOW ...

BOOM

GOOOAL!
SOME-DAY, I WILL SURPASS HIM!
HEH HEH.
CRICK
YOU MADE THE GOAL, SO I GUESS I'LL LET THAT ONE SLIDE
SORRY
OH YEAH ...
!
FWUP
YOU!
FWUP
WHOA!

HA HA HA HA
WHAT AN UPSTART!
OR MAYBE HE DOESN'T KNOW HIS LIMITATIONS
TRYING TO COPY THAT GUY. HE'S BOLD.
SHŌ.
OR HE KNOWS NO FEAR.

IT WOULDN'T BE ANY FUN OTHER-WISE.
THAT SHŌ! HE'S CRAZY, JUST LIKE I THOUGHT.

WHISTLE!

STAGE.205 Are You Trying to Kill Me?

FIFTEEN MINUTES INTO THE FIRST HALF, KANSAI GETS THE FIRST GOAL, MAKING THE SCORE 1 - 0.
BUT 18 MINUTES IN...
THERE'S SHŌ, WHO ALWAYS BLAZES HIS OWN TRAIL...
AND THERE'S SHIGEKI, WHO WAS ABLE TO BREAK HIS SHACKLES AND RUN FREE.
THE GAME IS STILL MOVING AT KANSAI'S OFFENSIVE PACE. THINGS ARE REALLY HEATING UP!
TOKYO TIED THE SCORE AND BROUGHT THE GAME BACK TO EVEN!
THERE'S ME...
AND THEN...
10

I'M THE ONE WHO'S LEFT BEHIND.
KANSAI STARTS UP FAST!
BAM
WHAM

WHOA!
NUMBER 10 INTERCEP--
WHAP

WAIT, HE DIDN'T?
HE SWEPT IT UP WITH ONE TOUCH!
YŪTO, HEADS UP!
THE BALL PASSES OVER NUMBER 11'S HEAD...
OH!
UH...
IT'S A DIRECT PASS TO YŪTO?!

INCREDIBLE!
BO
OM
IT'S A ONE-TWO OFF THE DIRECT PASS!
TA-TSUYA!
THEY'RE PASSING FAST!
TSK

TOKYO'S NUMBER 10 IS DRIBBLING ...
WHERE AM I GOING... WHAT AM I RUNNING FOR?!
1ST
2ND
EXT
...AND CUTTING INTO THE CENTER!

BUT WE'RE GONNA...
... KILL YOU!
YOU'VE GOT SOME GUTS.
BO
OH
ZWOO
OOSH
ARG!
WHAT THE HECK ?!

SHO OM
HE DODGED THE SLIDING DEFENDERS WITH A VERTICAL LEAP!
NUMBER 10 ISN'T SLOWING DOWN!
BA M
IT'S A NUT-MEG!

IS HE TRYING TO MAKE THE SHOT BY HIM-SELF?

HE'S UNSTOP-PABLE!

HE DODGED ANOTHER ONE!

STOMP

SHO

VE

TA-TSUYA.

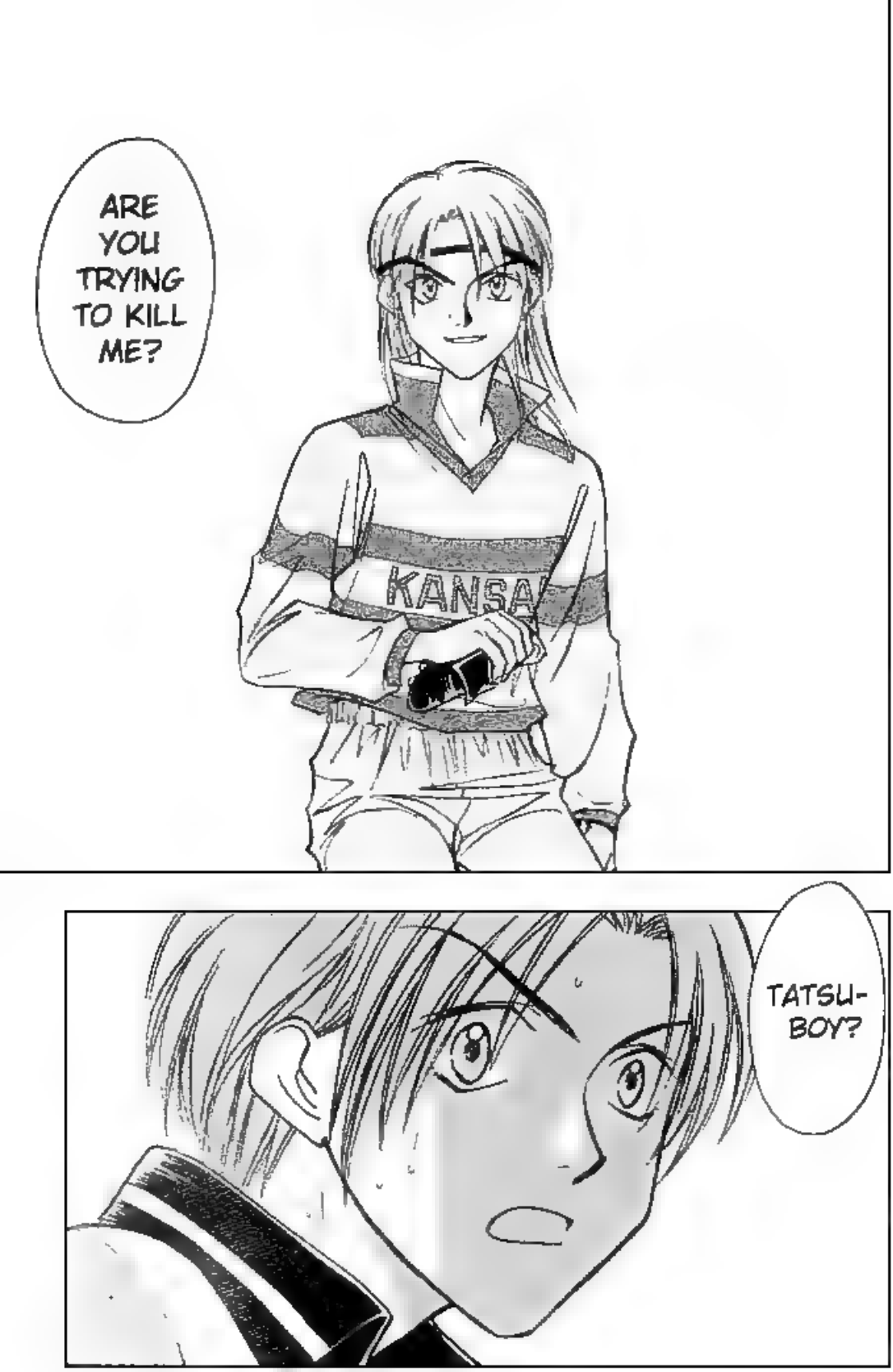
YOU!

ZOOM

AH!
HE'S CAUGHT!
BUT HE DOESN'T FALL!
100
F
!
GUH!

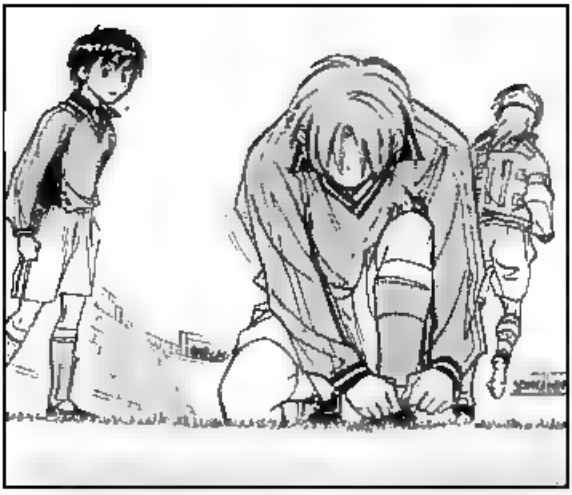
KA
POW

WH
AAM
OH, TOO BAD!
STRAIGHT TO THE GOAL-KEEPER!
WHACK
THAT WAS A CLOSE ONE...


ARE YOU TRYING TO KILL ME?
KANSAI
TATSU-BOY?

...A LONG TIME AGO.
WE'RE SO MUCH ALIKE.
REMEMBER, THIS SAME THING HAPPENED. .

...DON'T REMEMBER.
I...
I THOUGHT WE UNDER-STOOD EACH OTHER THE BEST.



OH YEAH?
10

TA-
TSUYA.

AND THE ONE WHO DEFINES HIMSELF BY HIS RELATION-SHIP TO OTHERS.
AND THERE, THE ONE WHO QUIT LYING TO HIMSELF.

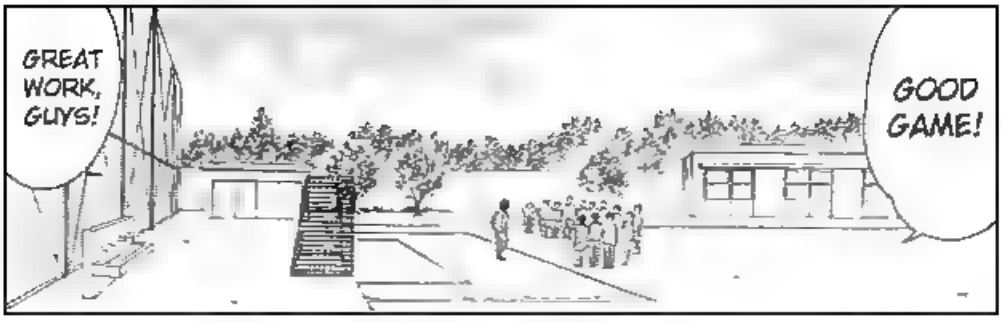
THE ONE WHO BLAZES HIS OWN TRAIL.

BUT THERE ARE SOME TRUTHS THAT CAN'T BE UNDER-STOOD UNLESS YOU CONFRONT THEM HEAD-ON.
NO ONE KNOWS WHICH WAY IS RIGHT.

SHOOM
SHOOM
...GETTING SERIOUS WITH ME.
SO YOU'RE FINALLY ...
SHIGEKI.

HOW DOES IT FEEL, SHIGEKI? GETTING SERIOUS--IT'S NOT AS PAINFUL AS YOU WERE AFRAID IT WOULD BE, RIGHT?
OW! OUCH!
YOU'LL END UP OVER-TRAINING.
JUST DON'T PUSH YOURSELF SO HARD.
I CAN'T TAKE IT!
IF WE DON'T GET THE KINKS OUT, YOU'LL FEEL WORSE LATER.
IT'S MY PAYBACK FOR GOOFING OFF.
I CAN'T AVOID HAVING SOME ROUGH DAYS.
SINCE I PLAN TO BE AS GOOD AS THOSE GUYS OR BETTER...

STAGE.206
I'm Pulling Ahead of You



SEE YA.
I'M FREE TODAY, SO I'LL JOIN YOU.
SO I'M GOING TO PRACTICE SHOOTING.
I FOUND OUT WE CAN USE THE SCHOOL GROUNDS AFTER-HOURS.
ME TOO.
REALLY? THANKS.

GOING HOME ALREADY?
HEY, SHIGEKI.

BESIDES, I'VE GOT SOME-THING TO DO TODAY.
NAH, I'D BETTER NOT I'M TOO TIRED.
DON'T YOU WANNA PRACTICE WITH US?
CATCH YOU LATER! ♡

HE SAID HE HAD TO GO DO SOME-THING.
YEAH.
SHIGEKI WENT HOME?

HUH?
KA-CHICK

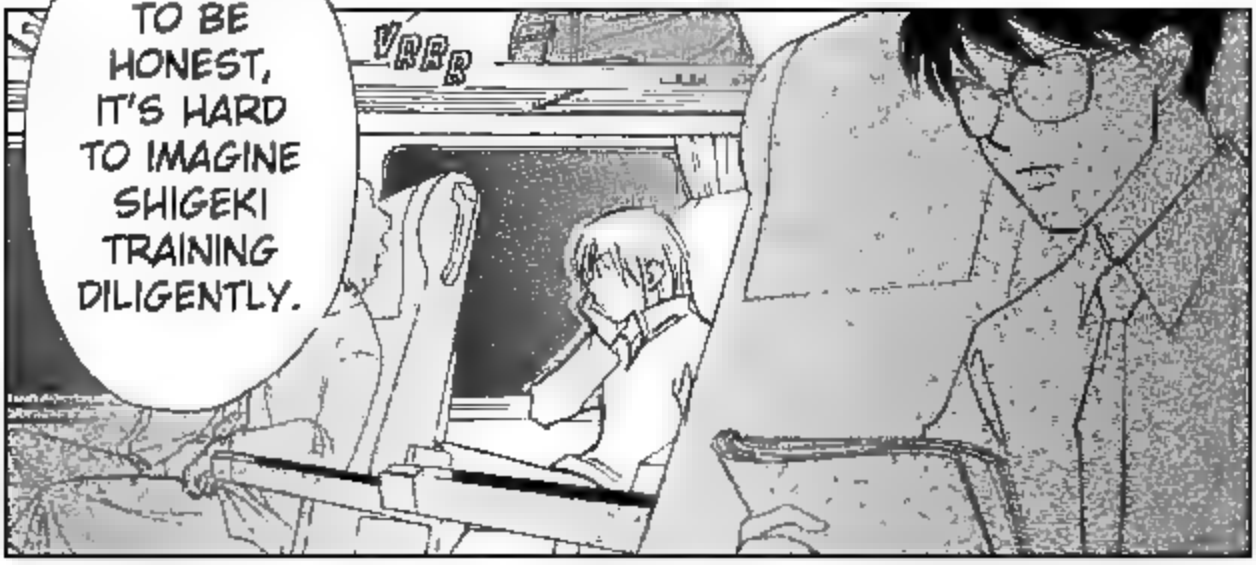
AND HIS INJURY IS HEALED ALREADY...
WELL, YOU AND SHŌ MADE THE SELECT TEAM...
WHAT IS?

IT'S KIND OF A BUMMER, DON'T YOU THINK?
HMM

BUT DOES HE EVEN CARE ABOUT SOCCER AT ALL?
I DON'T WANT TO TALK SMACK...

SO I THOUGHT HE MIGHT START WORKING A LITTLE HARDER.
BUT AS USUAL, HE'S GOING AT HIS OWN PACE.

MAYBE IT'S JUST THAT...
...HE THINKS HE CAN SLACK OFF BECAUSE HE'S TALENTED.


TO BE HONEST, IT'S HARD TO IMAGINE SHIGEKI TRAINING DILIGENTLY.
VRRR

HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
THUMP
THUMP

THAT'S SHIGEKI FUJIMURA.
JOGGING BEFORE PRACTICE?
WHO'S THAT?
THAT DUDE'S NOT MESSING AROUND.

HEY...

WHOA. REALLY?
I BET HE'S BEEN RUNNING FOR ALMOST AN HOUR.
...HE'S BEEN RUNNING THAT ENTIRE TIME.

I CAME 30 MINUTES EARLY, BUT...
YOU'RE EARLY TOO.
OH, MITSUNORI.

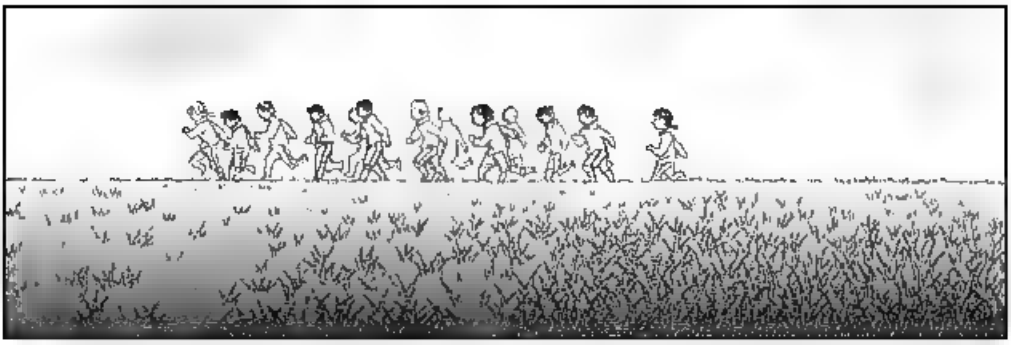
I
SHI-GEKI!
THAT'S LIKE TEN KILOMETERS! YOU SHOULDN'T BREAK CHARACTER LIKE THAT!
OVER... 20, I THINK.
WOW. YOU'RE TOTALLY SWEATING. HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU GONE AROUND THE TRACK?
JOG
JOG
WITH YOUR SUPER FLASHY STYLE, THIS DEADPAN ROUTINE LOOKS TOTALLY FAKE, YOU LOSER!
WHAT'S UP WITH THIS DUMB FAKE-SERIOUS ACT?
OH NO! IS THAT OUT OF CHARACTER FOR ME?
WHAT NOW?
AW...
WHACK

YOU CAME BACK? THEN WHERE WERE YOU BEFORE NOW?
TOKYO?
NO, I'M NOT! YOU BIG IDIOT!
YOU'RE THE OTHER HALF OF MY COMEDY DUO!
WHEN YOU SAID THAT, I REALLY FELT LIKE I WAS BACK HOME IN KANSAI AGAIN!
POKE
WHY DID YOU COME HERE?
TRANSFERRED SCHOOLS?
NO. MY HOUSE IS IN KYOTO.
BUT I STILL GO TO SCHOOL IN TOKYO.
IF YOU HAD BEEN IN KANSAI, THERE'S NO WAY I WOULDN'T HAVE HEARD OF SOMEONE AS GOOD AS YOU.
YOU'RE A SHARP ONE.
I DON'T MEAN TO PRY
THAT MEANS YOU'RE COMMUTING BETWEEN TOKYO AND OSAKA EVERY TIME WE HAVE A PRACTICE?
WHY WOULD YOU...
AH...IF YOU DON'T WANT TO TELL ME, YOU DON'T HAVE TO.
WELL, HOW CAN I EXPLAIN?
I DON'T MIND.

THERE'S THIS GUY I CAN'T LOSE TO.

ME?
IT'S ME... RIGHT, SHIGEKI?
SHI-GEKI ...

IF IT'S YOU, WOULDN'T YOU NEED TO BE PROMOTED FROM A SUBSTITUTE PLAYER TO A RESERVE PLAYER FIRST?
WHO'S WHAT?
YA NK YA NK
I GIVE!
I GIVE!
BANG BANG
NO!

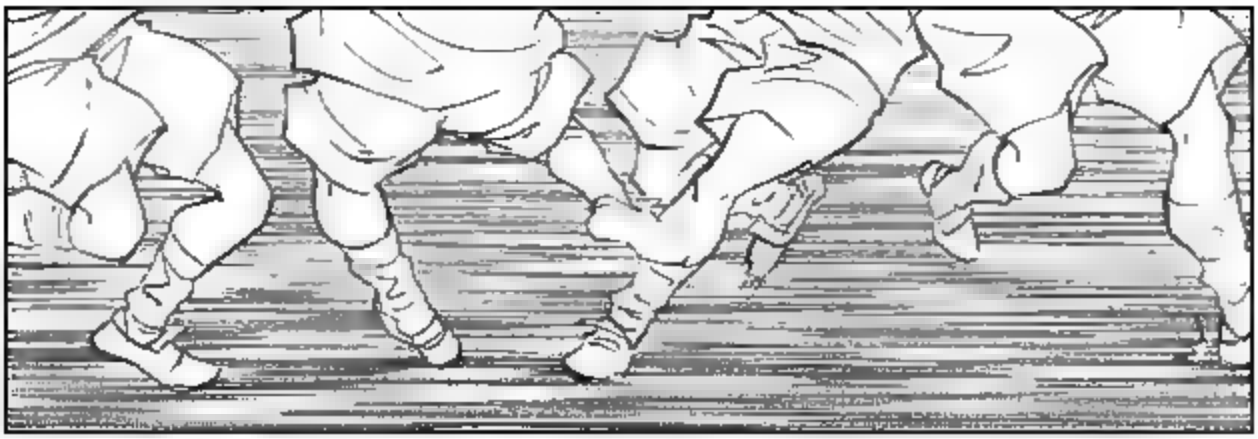


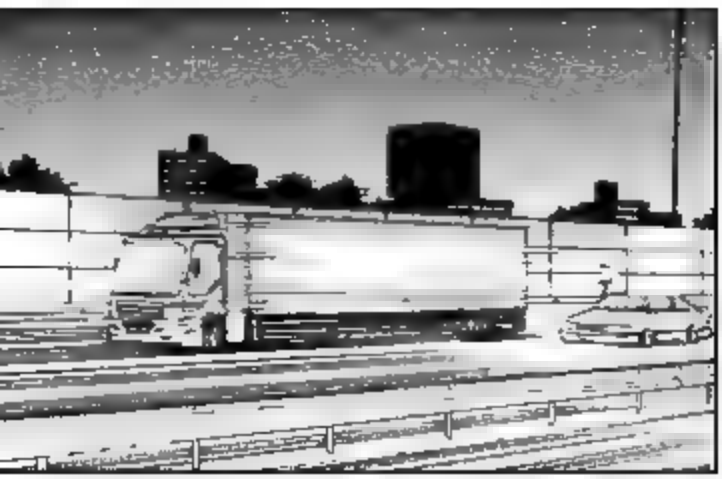
TOKYO
BOUND
TRANSIT
3
TOSUI

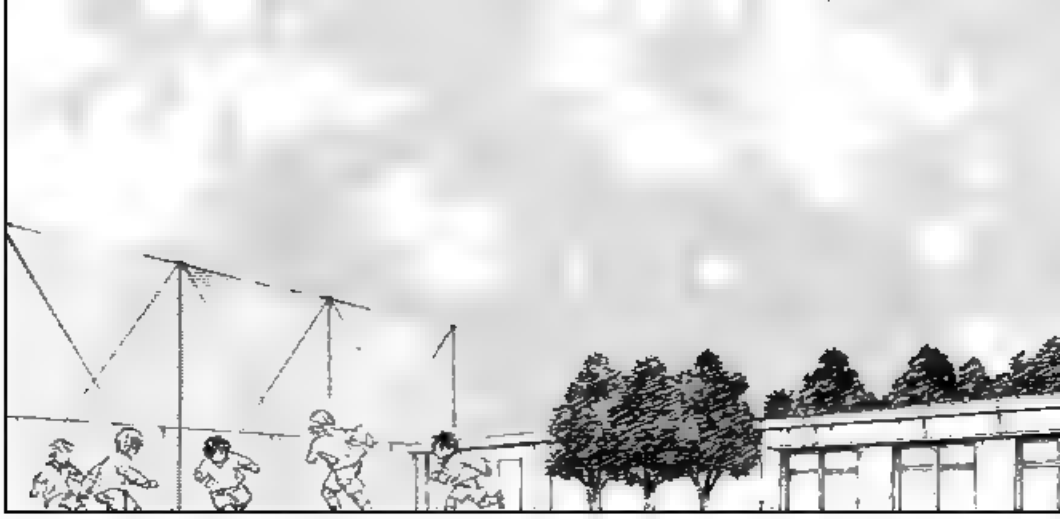
KANSAI

19
11

SLAP







TWIRL
BOOM

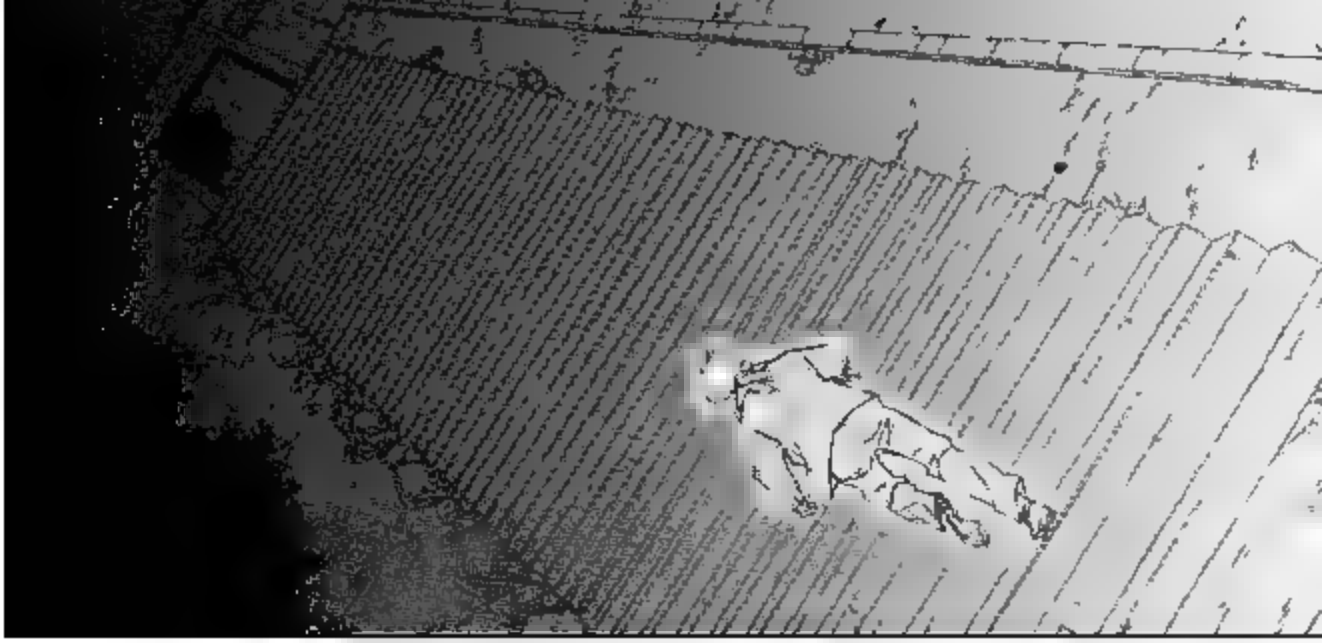
BAM

FWOOSH

HM?
SHIGEKI'S PHYSICAL ABILITY HAS IMPROVED, DON'T YOU THINK?
!

I DUNNO, I CAN'T REALLY PUT MY FINGER ON IT...
I'M NOT SURE ...
YOU THINK SO? THAT SEEMS NORMAL FOR SHIGEKI.

...
IF YOU ASK ME, IT'S EVEN MORE FREAKY THE WAY YOU'RE IMPROVING.

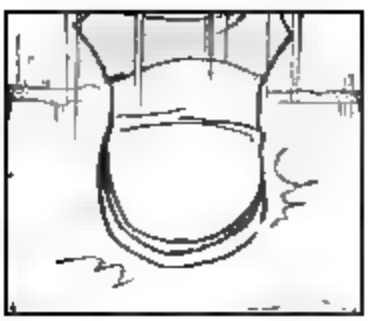


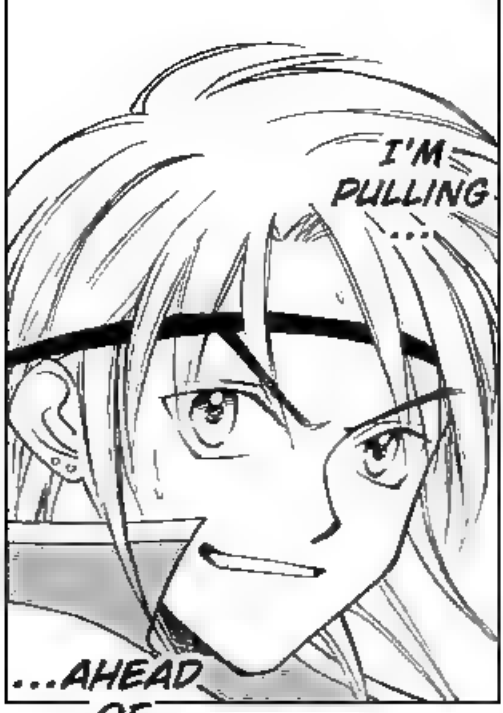
TMP
TMP
TMP

TM
TM
TM

HU
HH

STOMP




I'M PULLING...
...AHEAD OF YOU!!

HOW LONG ARE YOU GOING TO FOLLOW ME AROUND, TATSU-BOY?
DON'T YOU HAVE YOUR OWN GOALS YOU SHOULD BE ASPIRING TO?

I THOUGHT THINGS WERE FINE THE WAY THEY WERE.
THUD
I WAS CONSIDERED A REASONABLY GOOD PLAYER.
IN A NORMAL SOCCER ENVIRONMENT...
SHOOM

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
TO GET BETTER... TO GET STRONGER..

TA-TSUYA... YOU OKAY?
I'VE NEVER REALLY QUESTIONED IT OR GIVEN IT SERIOUS THOUGHT.

Continued in volume 24.

THIS SHOE STARTS IN ADULT SIZES ONLY--25 CENTIMETERS.
I'M SORRY, SIR.

Side Story
The Drama of 25 Centimeters

HUH?
I'LL TAKE THIS SHOE.
IT'S FINE.
THE DESIGN IS DIFFERENT, BUT OVER HERE...
HMM, THAT GUY...
FOR A CUSTOMER OF YOUR AGE, I WOULD RECOMMEND STAYING IN JUNIORS.
IF YOU WANT 24 CENTIMETERS OR 24.5 CENTIMETERS, THAT'S A JUNIOR SIZE.

Side Story
The Drama of 25 Centimeters

UH... OKAY.

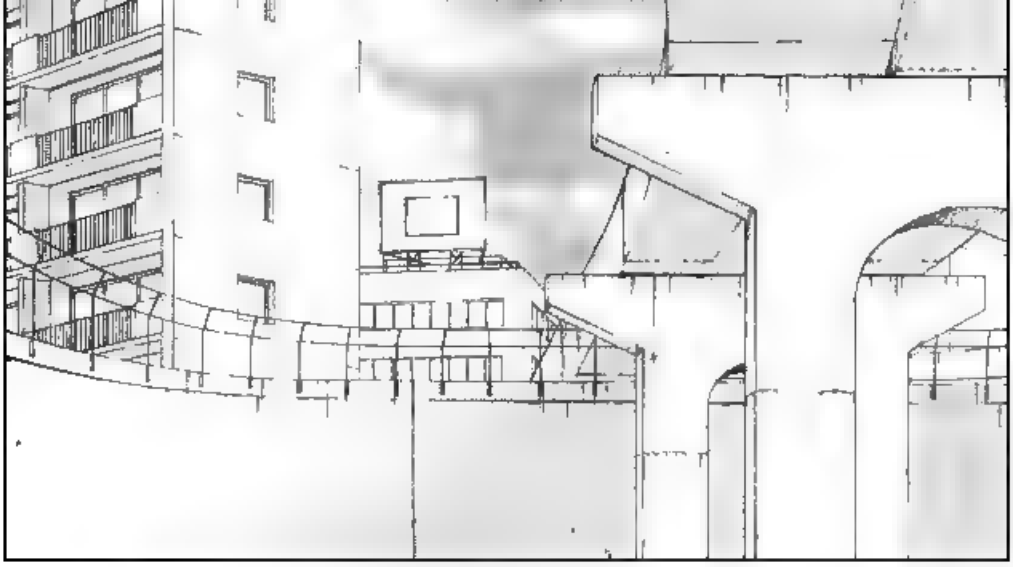
HMPH.

JEEZ, I WENT OUT OF MY WAY TO EXPLAIN ...
THIS LITTLE BRAT... BITING OFF MORE THAN HE CAN CHEW.

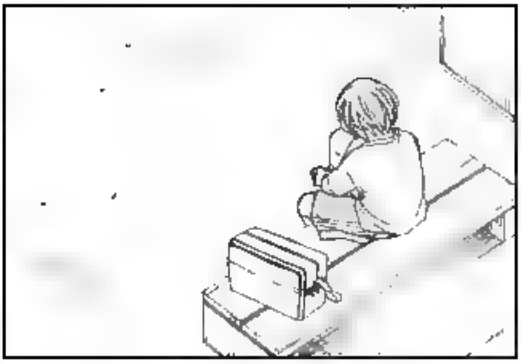
THAT GUY'S SO ANNOYING. BUYING THOSE EXPENSIVE SHOES LIKE THEY'RE NOTHING.
EIGHTEEN THOUSAND YEN? HE'S A SISSY LITTLE RICH BOY

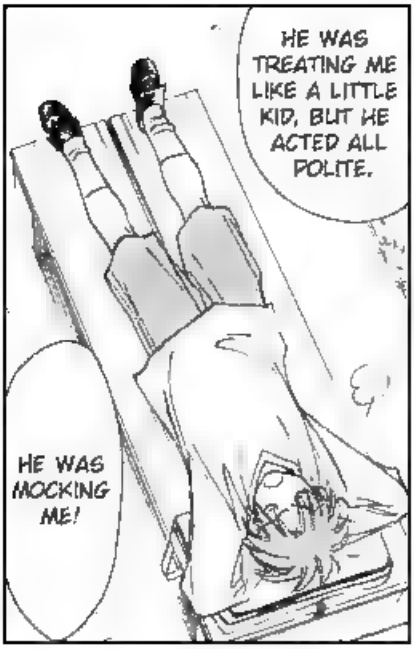
I WANT NEW SHOES TOO, BUT I'VE GOTTA SAVE UP
MAYBE I SHOULD START BOOKING MORE BACK-UP JOBS.

I'LL BE BACK FOR YA.
¥20,000-



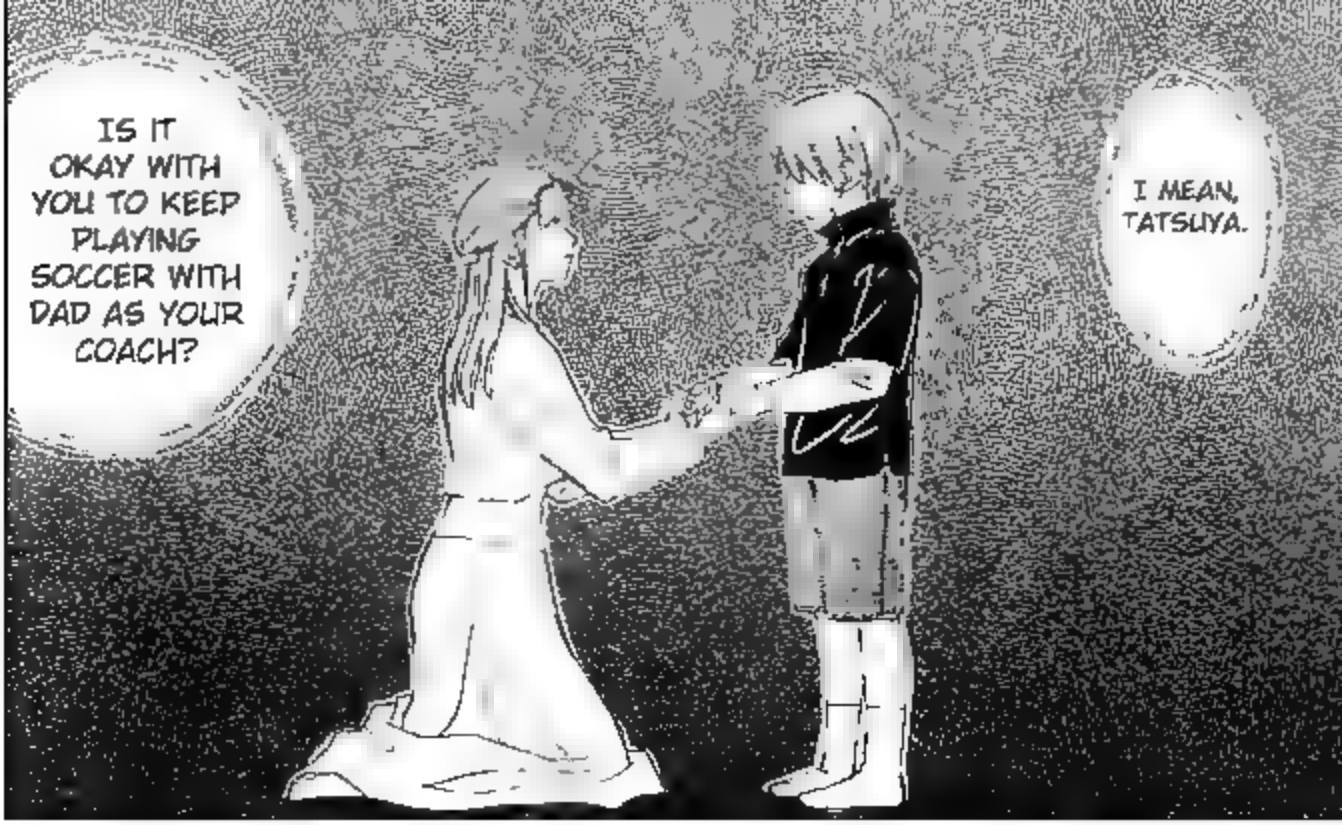
IT'S A LITTLE TOO BIG AFTER ALL.
CRAP.




HE WAS TREATING ME LIKE A LITTLE KID, BUT HE ACTED ALL POLITE.
HE WAS MOCKING ME!

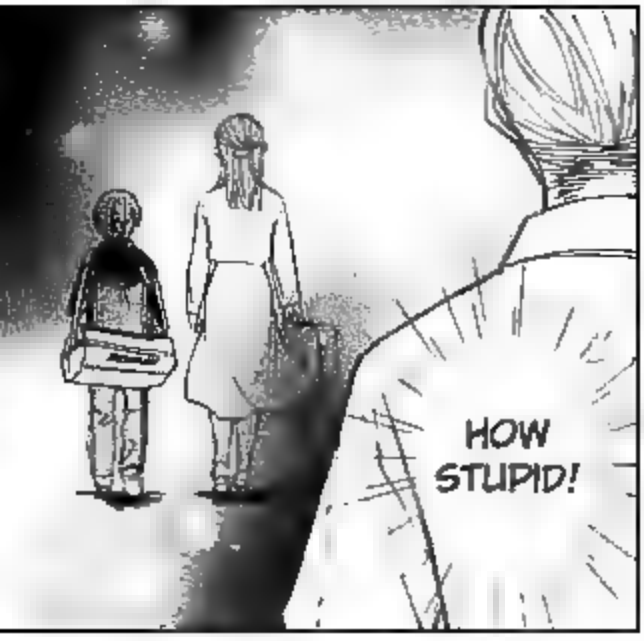
"FOR A CUSTOMER OF YOUR AGE. . .
"... JUNIOR SIZE MIGHT BE BETTER."
GRRR RRR

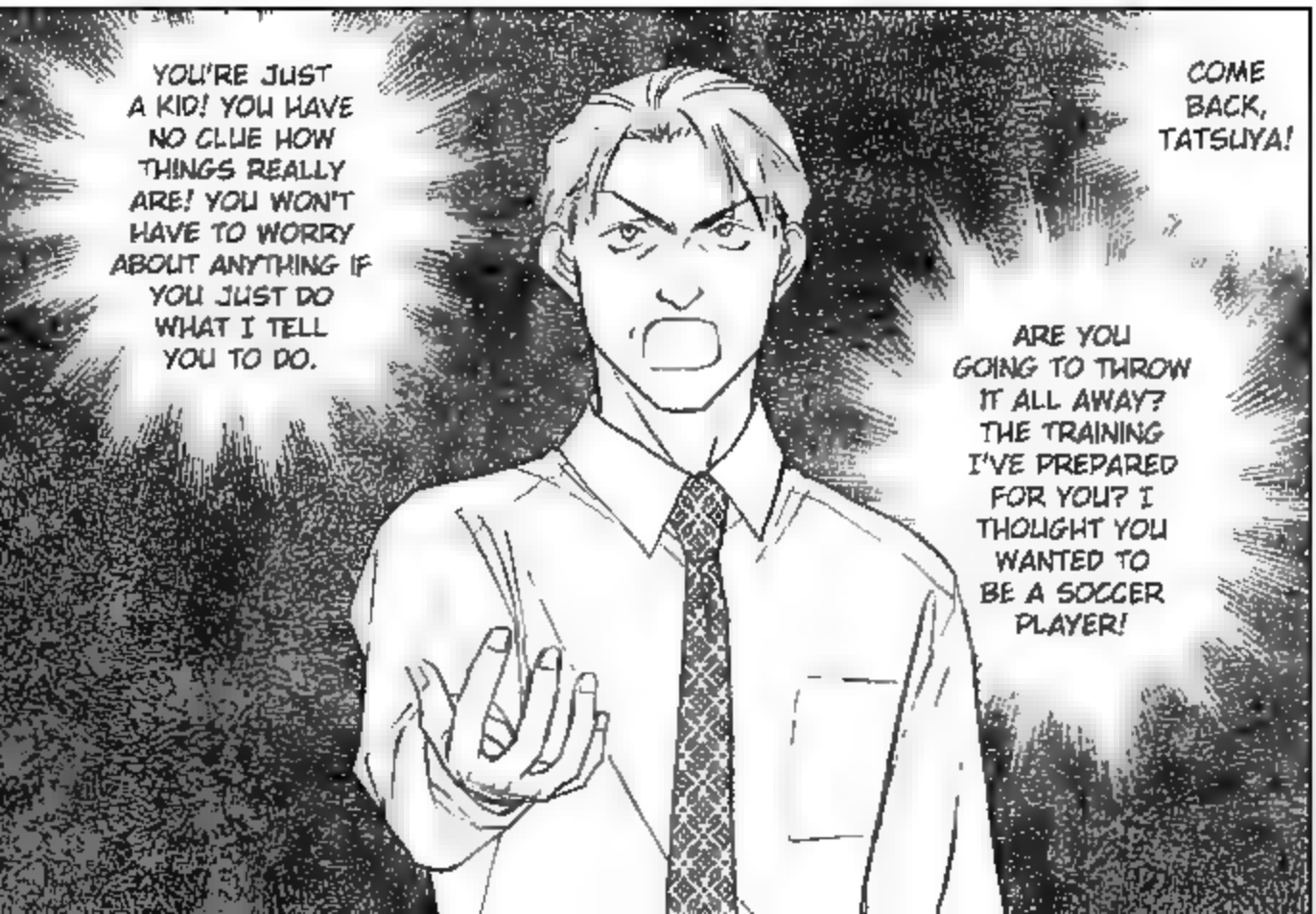
I WANT TO BECOME AN ADULT RIGHT AWAY.
SWEETIE.


IS IT OKAY WITH YOU TO KEEP PLAYING SOCCER WITH DAD AS YOUR COACH?
I MEAN, TATSUYA.

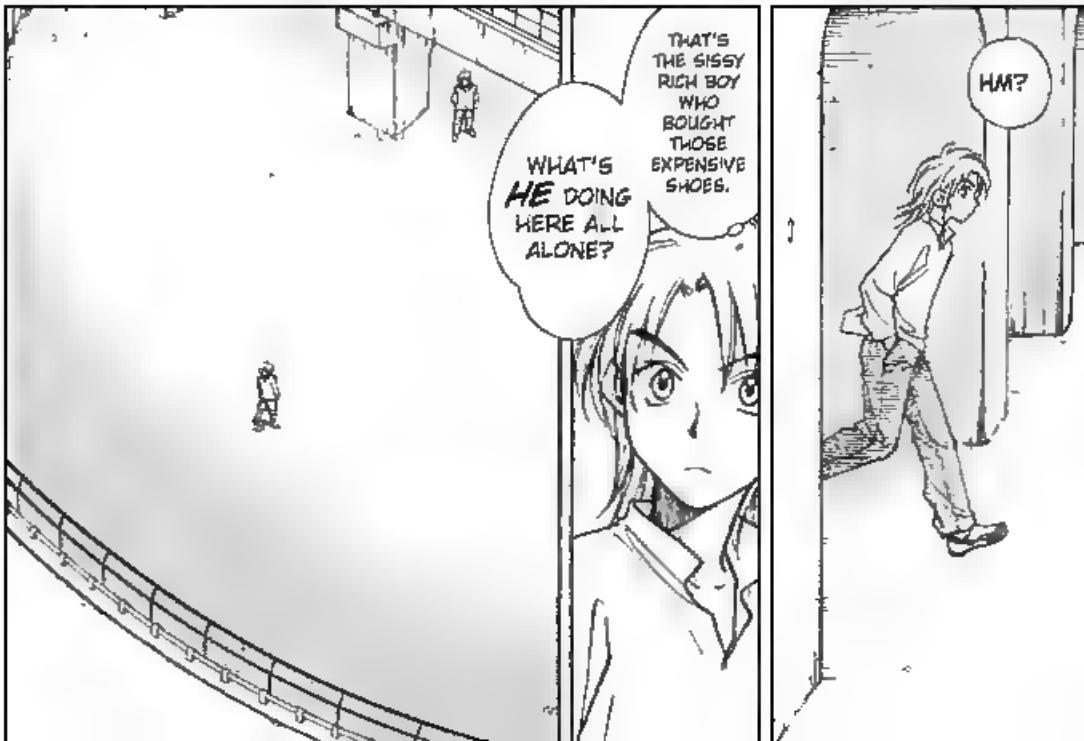
AND YOU HAVE YOUR OWN WAY. THAT'S WHAT I SEE, AS YOUR MOM.
DAD HAS HIS WAY OF PLAYING SOCCER ...

YOU SHOULD DECIDE.
THIS IS YOUR LIFE, TA-TSUYA.
WHETHER YOU STAY WITH DAD OR COME WITH ME ...


HOW STUPID!

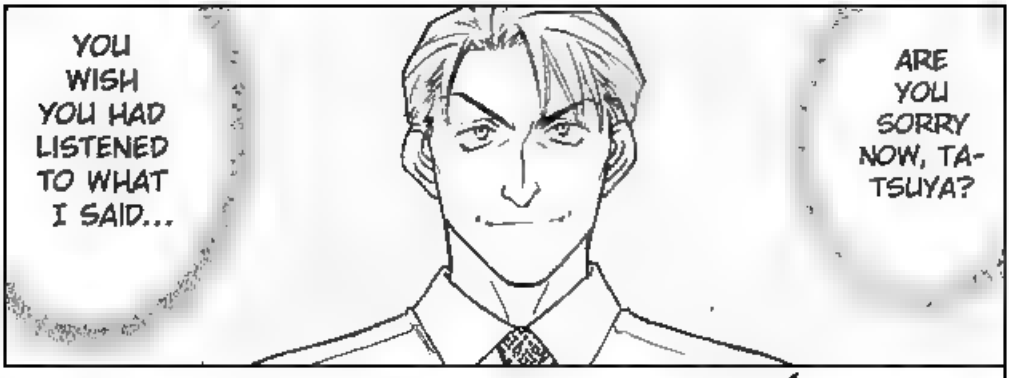

YOU'RE JUST A KID! YOU HAVE NO CLUE HOW THINGS REALLY ARE! YOU WON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT ANYTHING IF YOU JUST DO WHAT I TELL YOU TO DO.
COME BACK, TATSUYA!
ARE YOU GOING TO THROW IT ALL AWAY? THE TRAINING I'VE PREPARED FOR YOU? I THOUGHT YOU WANTED TO BE A SOCCER PLAYER!

SHUT UP.
STUPID ...!
STOMP
WHOOF


WHAT'S HE DOING HERE ALL ALONE?
THAT'S THE SISSY RICH BOY WHO BOUGHT THOSE EXPENSIVE SHOES.
HM?

DAD!

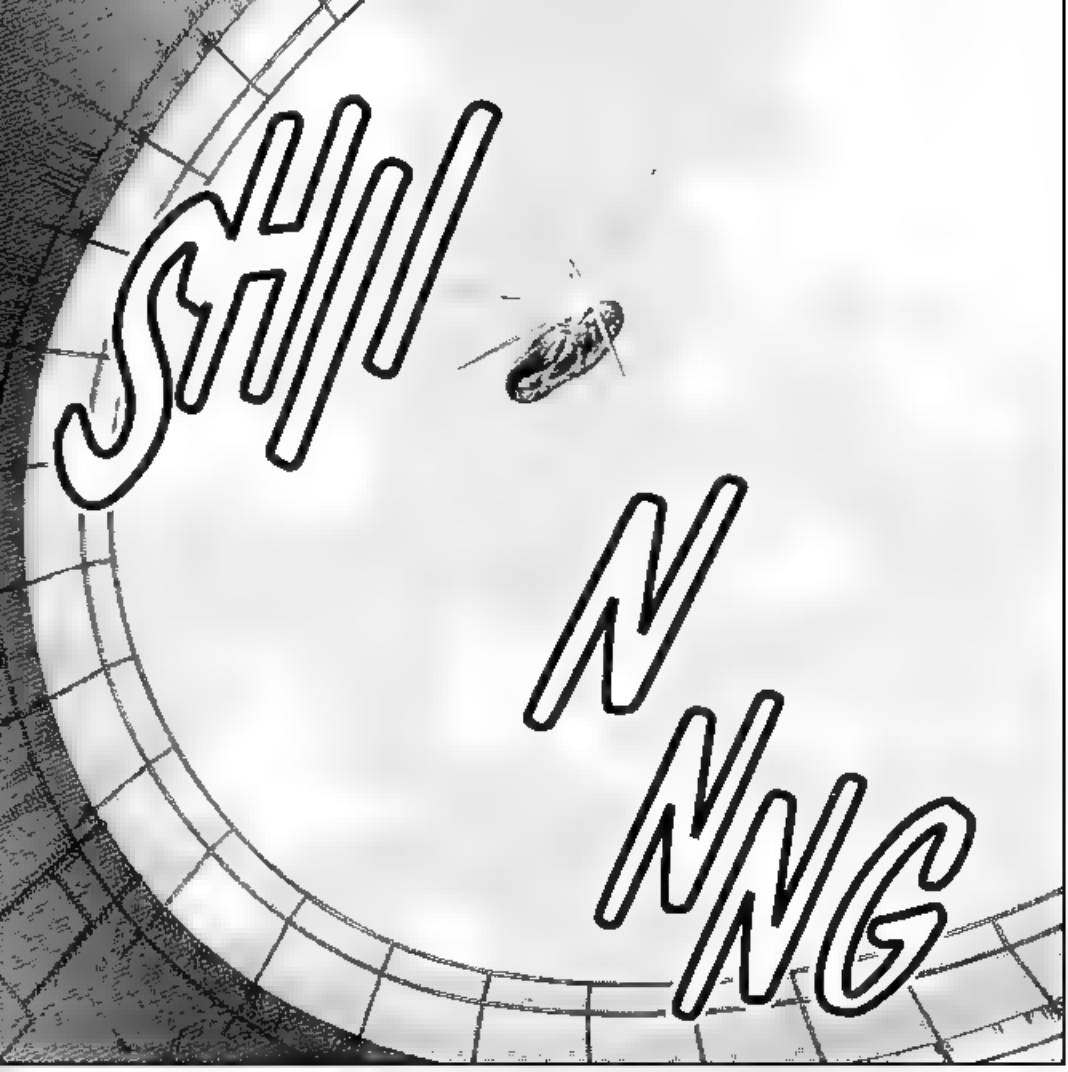
WHO
OSHH


YOU WISH YOU HAD LISTENED TO WHAT I SAID...
ARE YOU SORRY NOW, TATSUYA?

FWOo
SH
SHUT UP!

WHAP
HOW DOES THAT PUBLIC JOSUI JUNIOR HIGH FEEL, AFTER REJECTING MY PRIVATE SCHOOL?
POW
NO REAL COACH, NO REAL EQUIPMENT, NO TEAMMATES WHO ARE WHOLE-HEARTEDLY COMMITTED TO SOCCER.
SHUT UP!
KA POW
TUP
BORING PLACE, ISN'T IT?

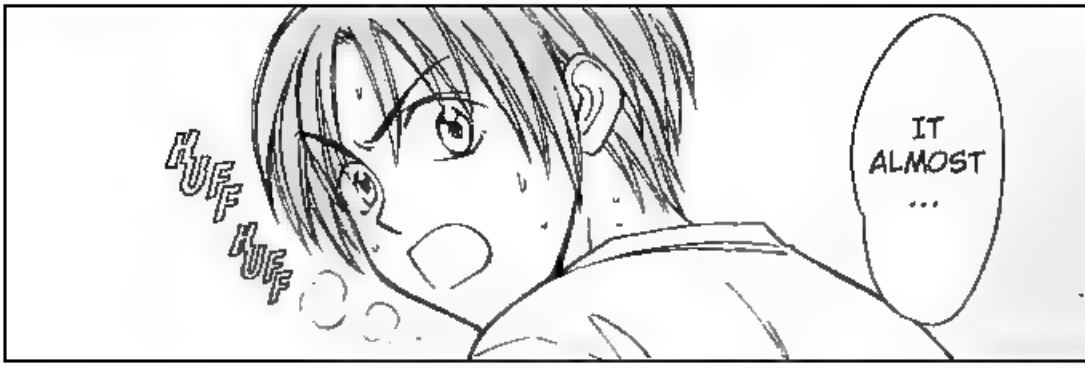
ZOOM
HE'S GOOD. WHO IS THIS GUY?
OUT-SIDE KICK!
WITH A GOOD CURVE.
YOU'RE THROWING YOUR PRECIOUS TALENT IN THE GUTTER. IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT, TATSUYA.
IN THE END, IT'S NOTHING BUT A HELPLESS CHILD'S USELESS STRUGGLE ...
SHUT UP!
WHAT A WASTE.
SHUT UP !!!
POW
WHAM


SHI
NNNG

WHAP

TUP
TU

THAT WAS A CLOSE ONE.


HUFF HUFF
IT ALMOST ...

ARE YOU TRYING TO KILL ME?
...MADE HOLES IN MY PRECIOUS FACE.

HEY, NICE SHOE.
AREN'T THESE EXPEN-SIVE?
TA-TSUYA MIZUNO.
HOW... HOW DO YOU KNOW MY NAME?
GASP
WAIT, AM I...
EVEN THOUGH WE'RE IN TOKYO, HE USES KANSAI SLANG..
HEY, BUDDY!
YOU SURE GOT SOME FANCY STUFF!
A JUVENILE DELINQUENT!
FLASHY BLEACH BLOND!
PIERCED EAR!

...AM I ABOUT TO GET MUGGED?

DOOM...

MY NAME'S SHIGEKI SATŌ.

I'VE HEARD ABOUT IT, BUT NEVER THOUGHT IT WOULD HAPPEN TO ME.
WHAT... WHAT SHOULD I DO?
CALL ME SHIGEKI.
BUT HEY, THAT CAME OFF YOUR FOOT REALLY EASILY.

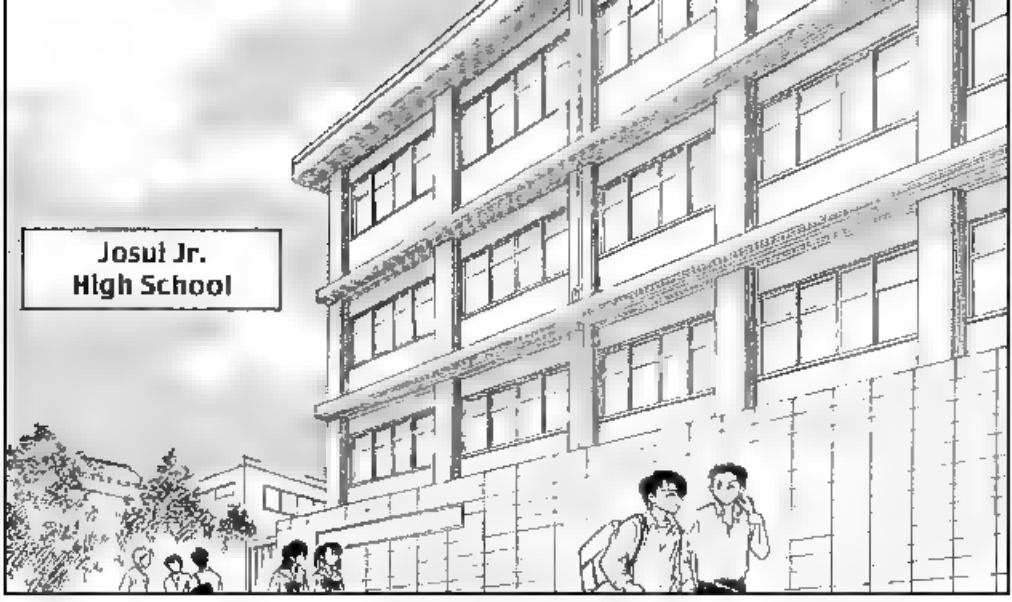
GRRAAH!

LITTLE RICH BOY.
ISN'T IT A LITTLE EARLY FOR 25 CENTI-METERS?
SMIRK

HEY!
WAIT!

WHOA
WHAP
GIVE IT BACK!

I THOUGHT WE COULD PLAY SOCCER TOGETHER.
HUH... THAT BITES.
KA-CHUNG
KA-CHUNG
KA-CHUNG
KA-CHUNG
KA-CHUNG
I THINK HE GOES TO MY SCHOOL.
HE COULDN'T HAVE COME UP TO ME AT A MORE EMBARRASSING MOMENT. UGH... WHAT A BUMMER.
"MY NAME'S SHIGEKI SATŌ."
WHAT'S UP WITH THAT GUY? HE WAS MAKING FUN OF ME!
HOW ANNOY-ING.



I WONDER IF I REALLY DID MAKE A MISTAKE COMING HERE.

OKAY.
SHIGEKI, COME OVER HERE.

NICE TO MEET YOU GUYS.
YOU'VE GOTTA BE KIDDING ME!
THIS IS SHIGEKI, FROM FIRST YEAR. HE'S GOING TO BE JOINING US AS A BACKUP PLAYER.

TATSU-BOY. ♡
YO.

A few days earlier...
LET'S BEAT UP TATSUYA MIZUNO!
HUH, THOSE ARE UPPER-CLASSMEN FROM THE SOCCER CLUB.
JUST BECAUSE HE CAN PLAY SOCCER KINDA GOOD, HE'S TOTALLY STUCK UP
WHAT?
HE'S JUST A FIRST-YEAR STUDENT, BUT HE'S SUCH A BRAT.

TATSUYA MIZUNO, HUH? I WONDER WHAT KIND OF GUY HE IS.
NO WONDER HE GETS ON MY NERVES!
WHAT THE HECK? IS HE AN HONOR-ROLL STUDENT? THAT'S EVEN MORE ANNOYING.
OF COURSE HE CAN PLAY
YOU KNOW, HE REJECTED MUSASHINOMORI AND CAME TO OUR SCHOOL. I HEARD A TEACHER MENTION IT.

DON'T PLAY DUMB.
OH... HEY, HONMA. WHAT'S UP?
YOU OFFICIALLY JOINED THE SOCCER CLUB.
SHI-GEKI.
WHAT'S TATSUYA MIZUNO LIKE?
TA-TSUYA?
BY THE WAY, HONMA ...
I'M A CAUTIOUS GUY, SO I DON'T WANT TO RISK IT.
I DO WANT TO PLAY SOCCER, BUT YOU'VE GOT SOME SUPER-SCARY UPPER-CLASSMEN HERE!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? I HEARD YOU WERE A BRAWLER.
HE'S MOUTHING OFF TO AN UPPER-CLASSMAN AGAIN!
THAT BROWN HAIRED GUY...
ARG!
LOOK, THAT'S TATSUYA RIGHT OVER THERE.

TOUGH JOB, HUH? GOOD LUCK.
SEE YOU, SHIGEKI.
HEY! YEAH, WHAT'S UP!
HON-MA!
HONMA! WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN TEACHING THESE FIRST-YEAR KIDS?!
THERE'S NO NEED FOR CAPTAIN HONMA TO APOLOGIZE.
AT LEAST TEACH 'EM SOME RESPECT!
I'M SORRY ABOUT THIS!
I'M TRULY SORRY.

IN MODERN SOCCER TRAINING, IT'S NONSENSE TO DO BUNNY HOPS.
I ONLY POINTED OUT WHAT'S COMMON KNOWLEDGE THESE DAYS.
FOR PLAYERS IN JUNIOR HIGH, THAT IS TO SAY, DURING THE MAIN GROWTH PERIOD, IT'S BETTER TO FOCUS ON HANDLING THE BALL AND POLISHING TECHNIQUE. THAT'S ALL I'M SAYING.
MUSCLE-BUILDING EXERCISES SHOULD ONLY BE BEGUN ONCE A PLAYER IS FINISHED GROWING--IN HIGH SCHOOL AT THE EARLIEST
NONSE--
WHAT?!
WE'VE GOT OUR OWN WAY OF DOING THINGS HERE!
BUT THIS IS JOSUI!
I DON'T KNOW WHERE YOU LEARNED THAT JUNK...

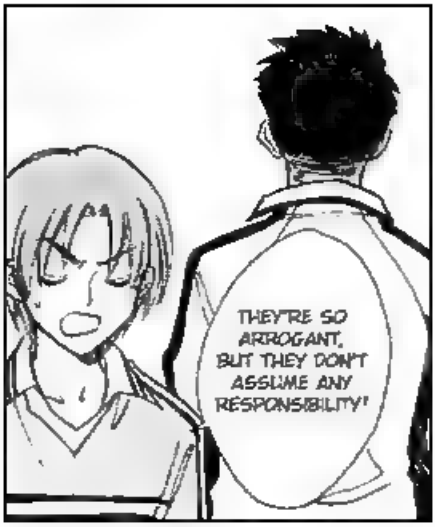
I'LL GIVE HIM A GOOD TALKING-TO!
PLEASE EXCUSE US!

IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT, JUST QUIT!

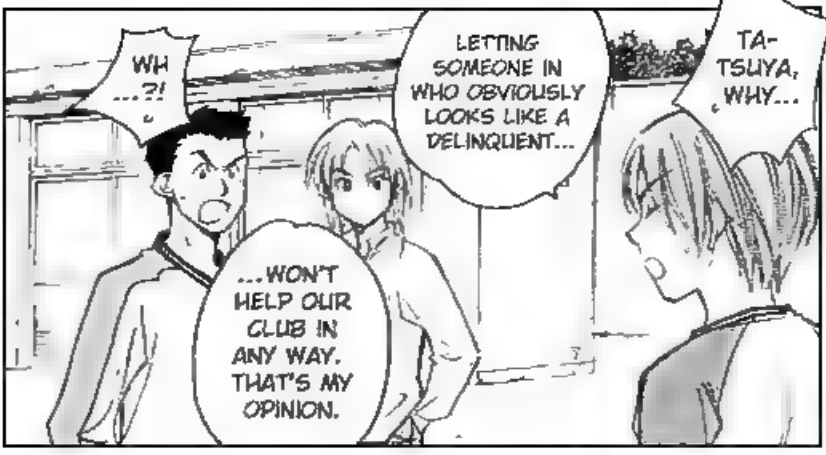
YOU'D BETTER TELL THAT KID WHERE HE GETS OFF!

I'LL PUNCH YOU MYSELF!

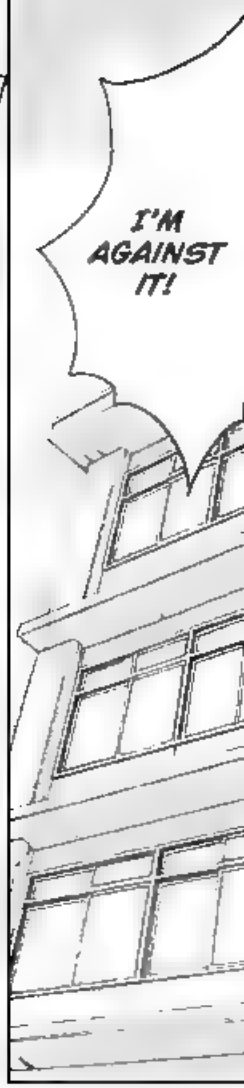
IF YOU SAY ANOTHER WORD...


THEY'RE SO ARROGANT, BUT THEY DON'T ASSUME ANY RESPONSIBILITY!

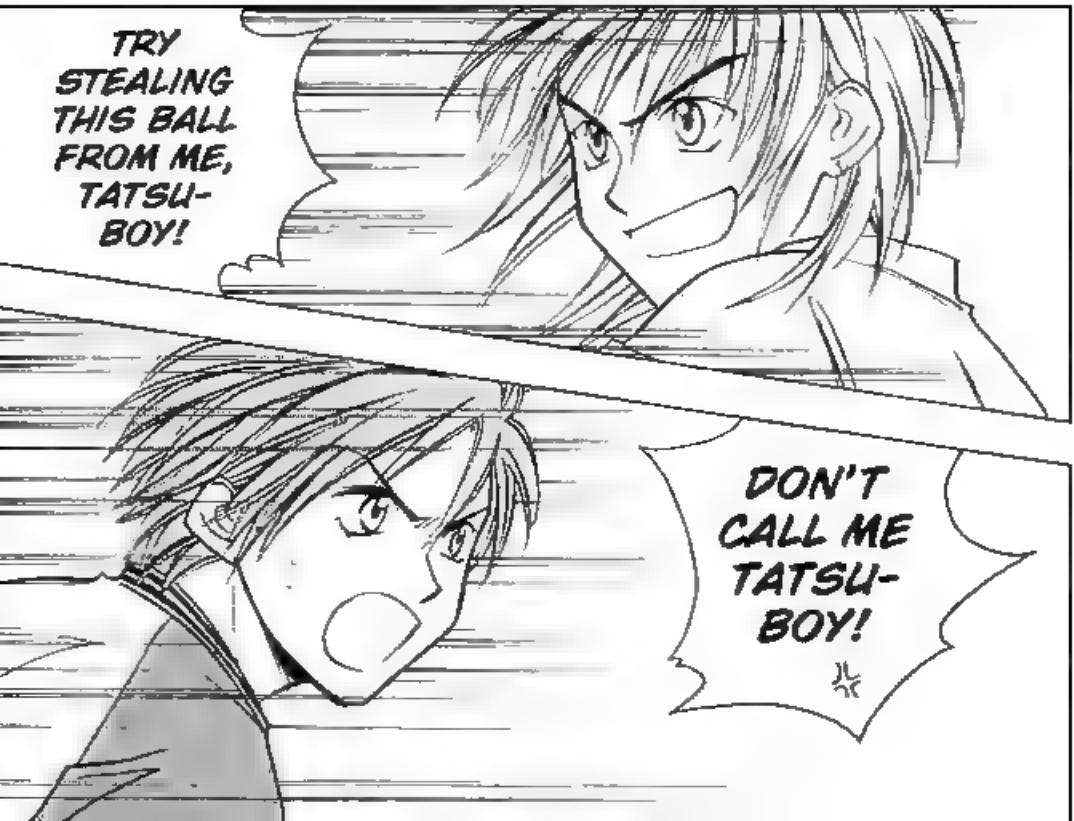
IN AN OFFICIAL CLUB, AN UPPER-CLASSMAN'S WORD IS LAW!
TA-TSUYA!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT KIND OF SOCCER CLUB YOU USED TO BELONG TO...
BUT THIS IS AN OFFICIAL AFTER-SCHOOL SOCCER CLUB HERE!
Y... YES, SIR!
WHAT DO YOU SAY?
WHAT ?!
ALL FIRST-YEARS, RUN AROUND THE SCHOOL 20 TIMES!
SO THAT'S TATSUYA MIZUNO, HUH?


WH ...?!
LETTING SOMEONE IN WHO OBVIOUSLY LOOKS LIKE A DELINQUENT...
TA-TSUYA, WHY...
...WON'T HELP OUR CLUB IN ANY WAY. THAT'S MY OPINION.

WHAT IF YOU PUT ME TO A TEST?
PRETTY NASTY THING TO SAY.


I'M AGAINST IT!

THIS HAS GOTTA BE IT, RIGHT?
IF IT'S A ONE-ON-ONE FIGHT...


TRY STEALING THIS BALL FROM ME, TATSU-BOY!
DON'T CALL ME TATSU-BOY!

SHO
OM
BA
P
FWI
P
B
A
P

HE'S GOOD!
THIS GUY...

THERE!
SHOOT.
WHAT THE...
OOPS.
GOT ...

– Thirty minutes later –
HUP!
YOU!
TSK
OW OW OW !!

– One hour and 30 minutes later –
YOU!
HUH!
GRAH!
SHOOT!

THE ROOKIES' TOURNAMENT IS COMING UP.
LET'S PRACTICE.

WE CAN'T WASTE ANY MORE TIME WATCHING THIS.

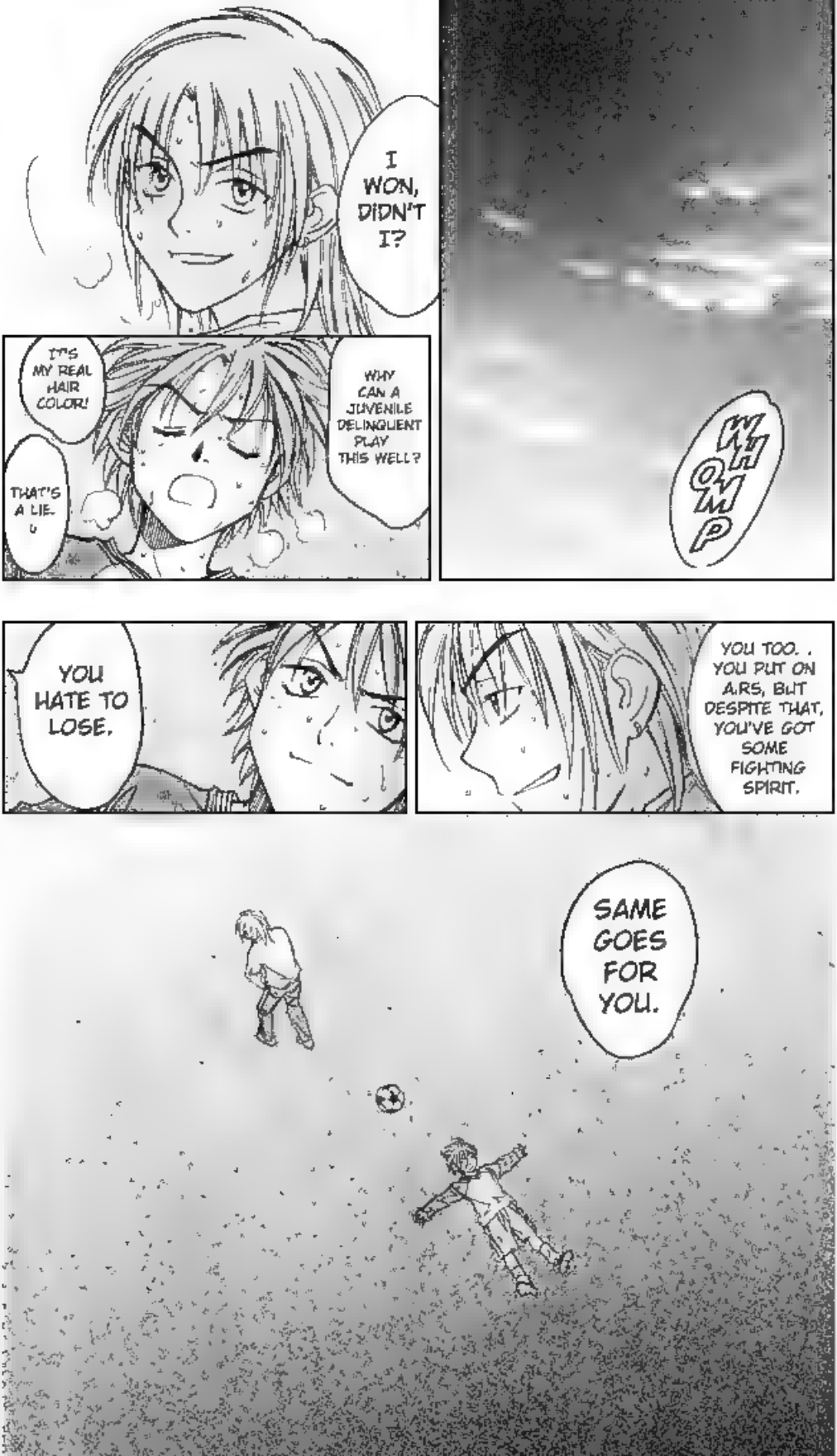
TH
Up

YOU'RE THE ONE.. WHO SHOULD... GIVE UP!
SH- SHUT UP!
HUFF
HOW POOPED ARE YOU?! IT'S ABOUT TIME...YOU GAVE UP.

MAN! I SHOULD'VE SET A TIME LIMIT!
GLARE
WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO?
HUFF
I MEAN, IF WE CAN'T SETTLE IT THIS WAY...

SWOOP
YAAH!
YOU'RE REALLY TENACIOUS!
GOT IT!
GRAH!
WOBBLE
WH-WHOAH!
WHOMP

TH WIP
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF


I WON, DIDN'T I?
WHY CAN A JUVENILE DELINQUENT PLAY THIS WELL?
IT'S MY REAL HAIR COLOR!
THAT'S A LIE.
WHOMP
YOU HATE TO LOSE.
YOU TOO. . YOU PUT ON AIRS, BUT DESPITE THAT, YOU'VE GOT SOME FIGHTING SPIRIT.
SAME GOES FOR YOU.

Tokyo Junior High Soccer Spring Tourna-ment
BAM
LOOP
BOOM

SHI-
GEKI!
WHAT'S UP WITH THE LUKE-WARM PASS ?!
RICH BOY!
JUST SNAP IT! SNAP!
WHAP

IF I GET SERIOUS, NO ONE ON THIS TEAM CAN KEEP UP W TH MY PLAYS. THAT'S WHY I'M HOLDING BACK.
WHAT IS HE TALKING ABOUT?
TRY GETTING THIS IN!
FINE! I'LL DO IT, THEN!
WH
AM
IF YOU CAN MAKE THE GOAL WITH THIS...
SHI-GEKI!
TA-TSUYA! THAT IDIOT!
NO ONE CAN SHOOT IF YOU CENTER IT THAT FAST AND STRONG!

10
11

IT FEELS GREAT!
THIS IS THE FIRST TIME A PLAY WENT SO PERFECTLY FOR ME.
HIS STYLE AND MY STYLE MATCH PERFECTLY!

WE DID IT, TATSU-BOY!
SLAP
WAS IT ONLY POSSIBLE WITH HIM?
THAT WAS AWESOME, SHIGEKI!
WE DID IT!
JOSUI WON!
LOOK, DON'T YOU THINK WE MAKE A GOOD COMBO?
YOU'VE GOT SOME GOOD PASSES! WHY ARE YOU SO STINGY WITH 'EM?
WITH SHIGEKI, MAYBE I CAN FINALLY PLAY HOW I WANT TO...
WELL, I GUESS IT WON'T BE TOO BAD.
LISTEN TO WHAT I'M SAYING!
I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU CALL ME.
I TOLD YOU NOT TO CALL ME TATSU-BOY!
IF YOU'RE HAPPY, YOU SHOULD BE HONEST AND SAY YOU'RE HAPPY, TATSU-BOY.

TA-TSUYA MIZUNO!
GR!PPP
20
JOSUI JR. HIGH
TWEEE

...KEPT ON WINNING WITHOUT ANY SETBACKS.

I CAN'T BELIEVE TOMORROW IS THE SEMI-SEMIFINAL ALREADY.

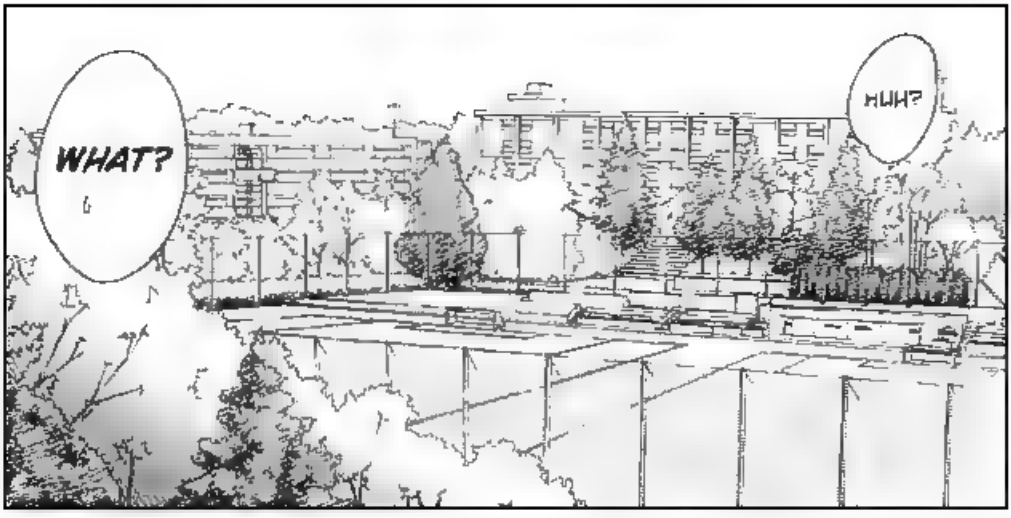
SINCE HE WAS LIVING AT A TEMPLE, I SUSPECTED HE WAS HAVING SOME TROUBLE AT HOME, BUT...
FREEDOM IS ACTUALLY PRETTY TOUGH, YOU KNOW
YOU THINK SO?
YOU HAVE SO MUCH FREEDOM AT YOUR PLACE. IT'S COOL.

IT'S KIND OF DUMB TO SAY THIS NOW, BUT I REALLY DO LOVE SOCCER.
SINCE SHIGEKI DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING, I DIDN'T ASK.

SHIGEKI NEVER PRIED MUCH INTO MY PERSONAL LIFE. HE WAS SOMEONE I FELT REALLY COMFORTABLE WITH.
IT'S THANKS TO YOU THAT I LOVE IT.
OH YEAH?
AND THAT THOUGHT KEPT TORMENTING ME...
I COULDN'T TELL IF I WAS PLAYING FOR MYSELF OR FOR HIM...
WHEN I WAS COACHED BY MY FATHER, I FELT LIKE I WAS SUFFOCATING

LET'S WIN THE CHAMPION-SHIP!

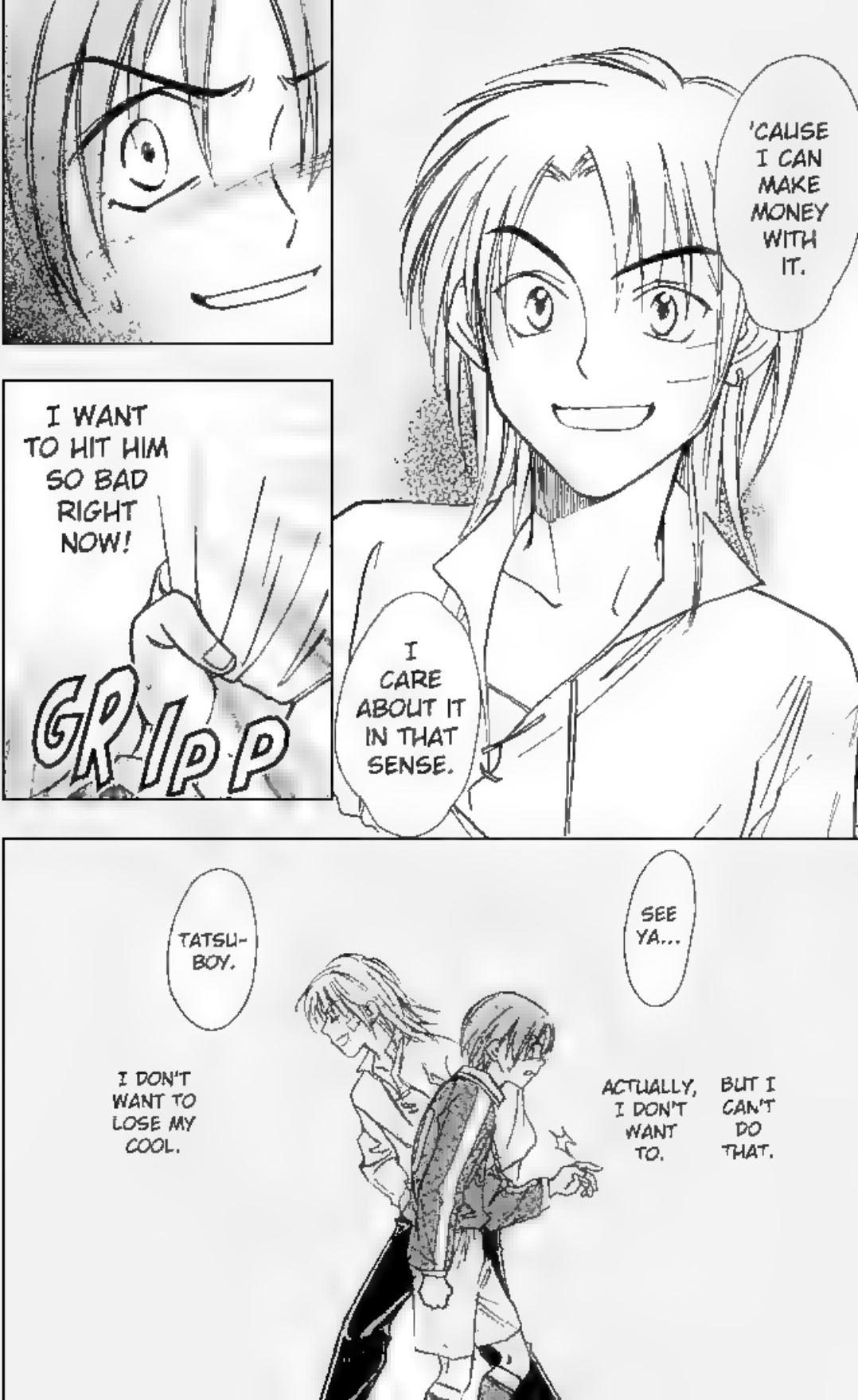
OF COURSE.


WHAT?
HUH?

I'M...
...
QUITTING THE SOCCER CLUB.

THAT'S A DUMB THING TO SAY, RIGHT WHEN WE'RE ABOUT TO PLAY A GAME!
YOU'RE KIDDING, RIGHT?
...
...TALKING ABOUT?
WHAT ARE YOU...
I'VE ALREADY DONE A LOT MORE THAN WHAT YOU PAID ME TO DO AS A BACKUP PLAYER.
BUT I'LL LET THAT SLIDE.
FOR JOSUI'S CURRENT SKIL.. LEVEL, MAKING IT THIS FAR IS GOOD ENOUGH, ISN'T IT?
WHAT?
IT'S ENOUGH THAT YOU MADE IT TO THE SEMI-FINAL, ISN'T IT?

WHAT DOES HE MEAN BY "GOOD ENOUGH" ?!
SINCE THEY WERE TALKING ABOUT CLOSING DOWN OUR CLUB AND ALL THAT.
...BUT I JUST NEEDED QUICK RESULTS.
I DID HIRE YOU.
OKAY, HONMA?
GASP
TOSHII
SO YOU WERE PLAYING SOCCER FOR MONEY?
HIRED? BACKUP? WHAT THE HECK?!
YOU CARE ABOUT SOCCER, DON'T YOU?
A LITTLE RICH BOY WOULDN'T UNDER-STAND.
THERE'S NOTHING OKAY ABOUT IT! IN SPORTS-MANSHIP...
THAT'S NOT OKAY?
GRAB


'CAUSE I CAN MAKE MONEY WITH IT.
I CARE ABOUT IT IN THAT SENSE.
I WANT TO HIT HIM SO BAD RIGHT NOW!
GRIPP
TATSU-BOY.
I DON'T WANT TO LOSE MY COOL.
SEE YA...
ACTUALLY, I DON'T WANT TO.
BUT I CAN'T DO THAT.

ACTUALLY, I ENJOYED IT QUITE A BIT.

I WAS STUPID TO EXPECT ANYTHING FROM A GUY LIKE HIM.
HEY
THE GAME IS ABOUT TO START. LET'S GO.

SORRY, TATSU-BOY.
CIRCUMSTANCES HAVE CHANGED.
THAT HURTS ...

THAT'S ABOUT AS SERIOUS AS IT EVER GOT FOR HIM.
SOME-THING HE COULD QUIT ANY-TIME...
LICK

TSK
SOCCER WAS SOMETHING TO PLAY ON A WHIM.
FOR HIM...

HE'S A..ONE

HERE HE COMES.

YEAH.
LET'S DO THIS!

THAT'S SO NOT COOL!

ROOF
WHO'S THAT ?!

HERE
HAM
GYAH!

YOU!
THE FIRST-YEAR...
I'M THE BACK-UP.
OOH, I'M SO SCARED.
WE'RE GONNA KILL YOU!

SMACK

SHOF
THUD

YOU LITTLE PUNK!
KONK
SWIP
K

WHOO SH
URK.
DRIP
YOU'RE TAKING THIS PRANK A LITTLE TOO FAR, DON'T YOU THINK?
UPPER-CLASS DUDES ...
BEATING PEOPLE UP WITH YOUR FISTS IS OKAY, BUT WEAPONS ARE BAD NEWS.
FIGHTING ONE-ON-ONE IS ONE THING...
BUT GANGING UP ON ONE GUY... PRETTY WEAK.
SHUT UP!
IT'S TRUE..
THAT THE LITTLE RICH BOY HAS A MOUTH ON HIM.
BUT THERE'S OTHER WAYS TO DEAL WITH IT, DON'T YOU THINK?

CRACK
BUT...

...DISGUSTING.
YOU GUYS ARE TOTALLY ...

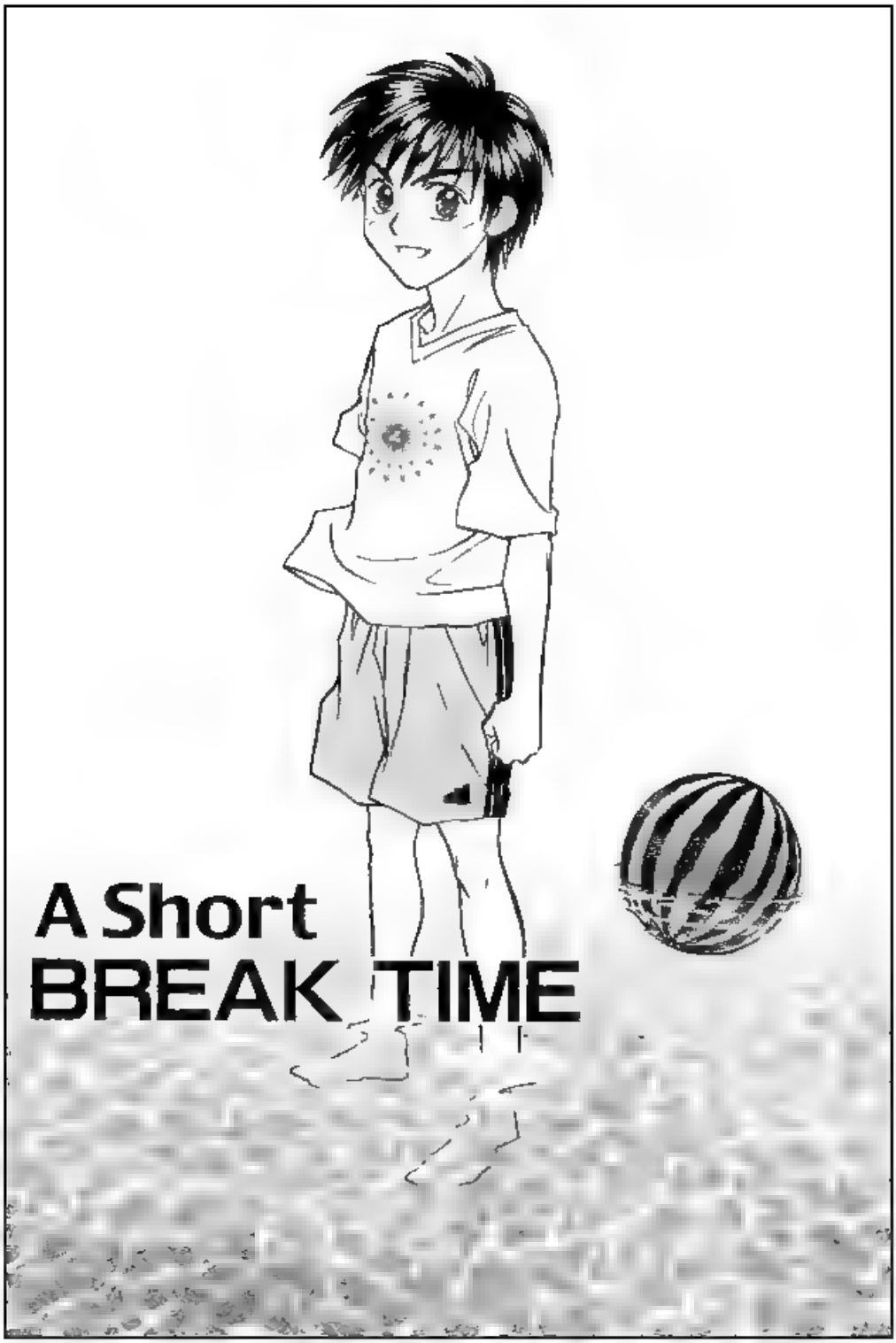
IN OTHER WORDS ...

IF YOU DO THIS NOW, YOU'LL HAVE TO FACE THE CONSEQUENCES LATER. YOU'RE WILLING TO THROW IT ALL AWAY?
HA!
IF YOU TOOK SOCCER AWAY FROM THAT SOCCER MANIAC, HE'D BE SO PATHETIC YOU COULDN'T EVEN LOOK AT HIM.
ME?
I DON'T CARE.
I'M NOT STAKING MY LIFE ON SOCCER THAT MUCH.
I'LL FIGHT WITH YOU UNTIL I WISH I COULD FORGET ALL ABOUT TATSU-BOY.
SO BRING IT ON!

IF YOU EVER FOUND OUT WHO I WAS WILLING TO GET HURT FOR, IT WOULD BOTHER YOU, WOULDN'T IT?

RIGHT, TATSU-BOY?

Side Story
The Drama of 25 Centimeters
(The End)

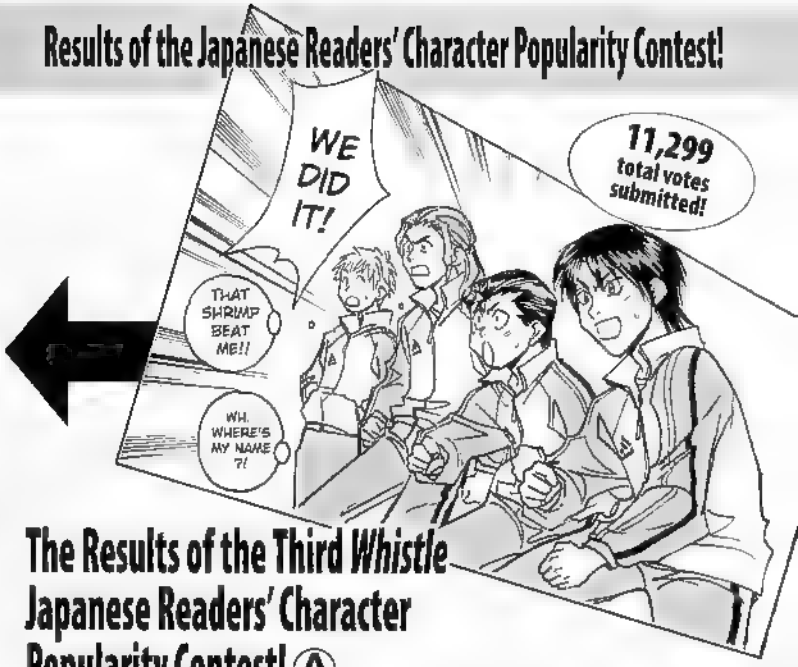


"THE THIRD CHARACTER POPULARITY CONTEST" STARTING ON PAGE 210 WAS ORIGINALLY PRINTED IN JAPAN'S *WEEKLY SHONEN JUMP*, NO. 37 AND NO. 38 OF 2002.

THE JAPANESE READERS' CHARACTER POPULARITY CONTEST!

Results of the Japanese Readers' Character Popularity Contest!

Results of the Japanese Readers' Character Popularity Contest!



The Results of the Third *Whistle* Japanese Readers' Character Popularity Contest! Ⓐ

Here are 9th through 63rd places!

RANKING	NAME	RANKING	NAME	RANKING	NAME
9	Sen Fujihara	33	Satoru Ogata	58	Yūko Kafun
10	Katsuki Shibutawa		Ryōhei Tatsumi		Yusuke Morinaga
11	Eishi Kaku	36	Kensuke Kida		Akito Kojima
12	Shōei Takayama	37	Miyuki Sakurai		Koga Takahashi
13	Takumi Kasai		Norihiro Yokoyama		Kensuke Shiomi
14	Yōta Wakana	39	Teppei Kojiwa	63	Naofumi Nagayama
15	Taki Sugahara		Hiroyoshi Ito		Tomoyuki Yamagawa
16	Masaki Kurokawa	41	Kyōshirō Ito		Do-hun Kim
17	Ryūsuke Yamaguchi	42	Shūsaku Matriya		Kyushu No.1
18	Yun-gyeong Yi	43	Shōji Takahashi		Soccer Boi
19	Ryōichi Teiya		Naoki Inoue		Yasuaki Honma
20	Shigeyoshi Yoshida		Obara Sawa		Kida
21	Yuki Kajiura	46	Hyeong Yoon		Bunasta (Fukuyō Coach)
22	Mitsuhito Inoue	47	Ryōsuke Kuroyuki		Hajime
23	Atsushi Ichara		Tōgo Amamiya		Yutaka Ozaki
	Hanako Shitara		Ryōta Nagase		Ippei Toyama
25	Yuichirō Sakuraba		Gōsuke Hata		Takayuki Majima
26	Chihiro Oda		Souju Matsushita		Masashi Hayano
27	Yoshitada Ishii		Manato Takai		Ji-hyun Choi
28	Toshiki Sugama		Yudai Hai		Lawn Caretaker
29	Kentarō Kōdatsu		Oyasan		Daisuke Hayashi
30	Takashi Narumi		Yasuto Negishi		Kosuke Nanto
	Kō Kazamatsuri	58	Nene Yokoyama		
32	Akira Saitō		Kentaro Ōsawa		
33	Masahiro Suo		Chika Asakura		

The Results!!

Who stole the first-place crown?!

Here are 9th through 63rd places!

RANKING	NAME
9	Seiji Fujishiro
10	Katsurō Shibusawa
11	Eishi Kaku
12	Shōei Takayama
13	Takumi Kasa
14	Yūto Wakana
15	Taku Sugihara
16	Masaki Kurokawa
17	Keisuke Yamaguchi
18	Yun-gyeong Yi
19	Ryoichi Tenjo
20	Mitsunori Yoshida
21	Yuki Kojima
22	Mitsuhiro Hinase
23	Atsushi Uehara
	Keisuke Shitara
25	Yūichirō Sakuraba
26	Chihiro Oda
27	Yoshitada Jōkō
28	Toshiki Sugama
29	Kentarō Kozutsu
30	Takashi Narumi
	Kō Kazamatsuri
32	Akira Saion,
33	Masahiro Suō

RANKING	NAME
33	Satoru Ogata
	Ryōhei Tatsumi
36	Keisuke Kida
37	Miyuki Sakurai
	Heima Yokoyama
39	Teppei Koiwa
	Hitoyoshi Iga
41	Kyūshū No. 6
42	Shigeru Mamiya
43	Shūji Nakanishi
	Naoki Inoue
	Obanazawa
46	Hyeong Yoon
47	Kyōsuke Kurosuki
	Tōgo Amamiya
	Ryōta Nagase
	Gosuke Hata
	Soujū Matsushita
	Masaro Takai
	Yūdai Itai
	Oyassan
	Yasuto Negishi
56	Nene Yokoyama
	Kentarō Ootsuka
	Chika Asakura

RANKING	NAME
56	Yūko Katori
	Yūsuke Monnaga
	Akito Kojima
	Kōgo Takahashi
63	Kensuke Shiomi
	Naofumi Nagayama
	Tomoyuki Yamakawa
	Do-han Kim
	Kyūshū No. 5
	Soccer Bar
	Yasuaki Honma
	Oda
	Buruusu (Rakuyō Coach)
	Holmes
	Yutaka Ozaki
	ppei Toyama
	Takayuki Maejima
	Masashi Hayano
	m-hun Choi
	Lawn Caretaker
	Daisuke Higuchi
	Kōsuke Naitō

What place did your favorite character make?

Places 11th through 55th over here!

RANKING	NAME
40	Shigeru Mamiya
41	Shū, Nakanishi
42	Naoki Inoue
	Kyōsuke Kurosuki
	Hyeong Yoon
45	Obanazawa
	Oyassan
	Yasuto Negishi
48	Tōgo Amamiya
	Yūdai Itai
	Kyūshū No. 6
	Akito Kojima
	Masato Takai
	Soujō Matsushita
	Yūsuke Morinaga
55	Kentarō Otsuka
	Yutaka Ozaki
	Oda
	Chihiro Oda
	Yuko Katori
	Do-han Kim
	Kyūshū No. 5
	Soccer Ball
	Lawn Caretaker
	Kōgo Takahashi
	"Travel" T Shirt
	In-hun Choi
	Kōsuke Naitō
	Ryōta Nagase
	Naofumi Nagayama
	Gosuke Hata
	Holmes
	Takayuki Maejima
	Tomoyuki Yamakawa
	Nene Yokoyama

RANKING	NAME
11	Kazu Kunugi
12	Shōei Takayama
13	Yuto Wakana
14	Takumi Kasai
15	Masaki Kurokawa
16	Taki Sugihara
17	Keisuke Yamaguchi
18	Yun-gyeong Yi
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25	Atsushi Uehara
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27	Toshiki Sugama
28	Kentaro Kozutsu
29	Takashi Narumi
30	Kō Kazamatsuri
31	Satoru Ogata
	Akira Saionji
33	Keisuke Kida
	Teppei Korwa
	Masahiro Suō
36	Miyuki Sakurai
	Heima Yokoyama
38	Hitoyoshi Iga
	Ryōhei Tatsumi

Results of the Japanese Readers' Character Popularity Contest!

So we recounted the votes. ♡

EMERGENCY SPECIAL EVENT

Popularity Votes Result B 1st Place through 10th Place Announcement!

RANKING	NAME
1	Shigeki Sato
2	Tsubasa Shiina
3	Daichi Fuwa
4	Sho Kazamatsuri
5	Akira Mikami
6	Tatsuya Mizuno
7	Kazuma Sanada
8	Seiji Fujishiro
9	Eishi Kaku
10	Katsurō Shibusawa

Results of the Japanese Readers' Character Popularity Contest!

RANKING	NAME
11	Kazu Kunugi
12	Shōei Takayama
13	Yūto Wakana
14	Takumi Kasai
15	Masaki Kurokawa
16	Taki Sugihara
17	Ke suke Yamaguchi
18	Yun-gyeong Yi
19	Ryoichi Tenjo
20	Mitsunori Yoshida
21	Mitsuhiro Hinase
22	Yuk Ko, ma
23	Heisuke Shitara
24	Yū-chirō Sakuraba
25	Atsushi Uehara
26	Yoshitada Jōkō
27	Toshiki Sugama
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33	Keisuke Kida
	Teppe Koiwa
	Masahiro Suō
36	Miyuki Sakurai
	He ma Yokoyama
38	H toyosh Iga
	Ryōhei Tatsumi

RANKING	NAME
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	Soujū Matsush ta
	Yusuke Mor naga
55	Kentarō Ootsuka
	Yutaka Ozaki
	Oda
	Chihiro Oda
	Yūko Katori
	Do-han Kim
	Kyūshu No. 5
	Soccer Bal
	Lawn Caretaker
	Kōgo Takahashi
	"Travel" T-Shirt
	In-hun Choi
	Kōsuke Na tō
	Ryōta Nagase
	Naofum Nagayama
	Gosuke Hata
	Holmes
	Takayuk Maejima
	Tomoyuki Yamakawa
	Nene Yokoyama

Next in Whistle!

YOU'LL NEVER WALK ALONE

The battle against Kansai Select goes into high gear, as Kansai Select puts their best players on the field. Tatsuya turns up the pressure on Shô to perform at a new level. But Shô soon comes up against an obstacle he's never faced before. exhaustion. With more on-field minutes than he's ever played before, is Shô too drained to support the team?

Available January 2010!

ProcrastinatorsUnite

Whistle v23 ch 204

Scanner and Cleaner: SecretWings

Here's another chapter update =D

So what do you think of our scanlation?
Could had been better?
Drop a feedback at our site!

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ProcrastinatorsUnite

Whistle v23 ch 205+206

Scanner and Cleaner: SecretWings

Recruiting!!

Looking for:
-translators
-cleaners
-typesetters
-editors

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ProcrastinatorsUnite

Whistle v23 Side Story

Scanner and Cleaner: SecretWings

Recruiting for a new project!!

Looking for:
- -translators
- -cleaners
- -typesetters
- -editors

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Whistle v 23 ch 201

Scanner and Cleaner: SecretWings

Sorry for the late update.

In the future for this volume,
I will be releasing chapter by chapter.

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